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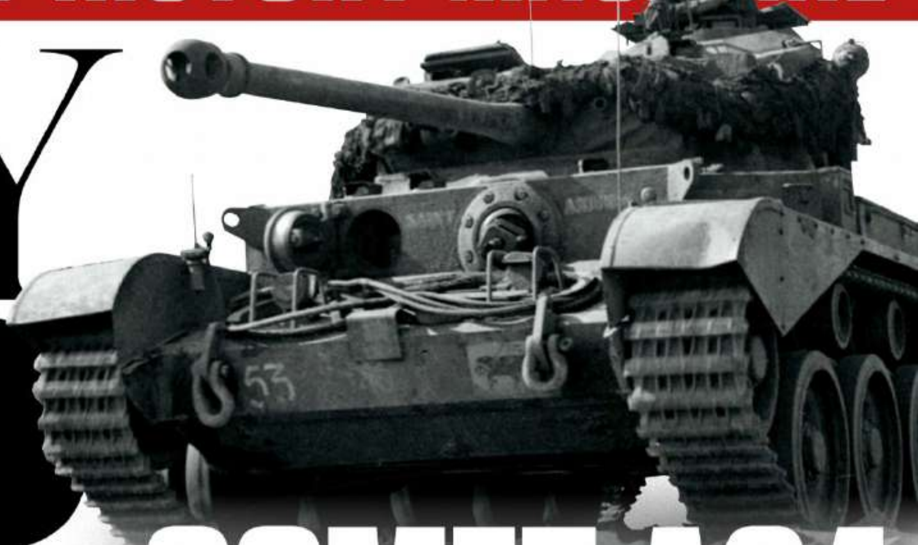
HISTORY *of* WAR



COMET A34

Britain's Panther hunter

NAPOLEON'S DOWNFALL

- *His path from emperor to exile*
- *Inside his daring escape plans*
- *Top historian on his final days & legacy*

KAISER'S FINAL DAYS

Wilhelm II: Life after the Reich

PLUS:

Falkland sinkings ✪
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RECONQUISTA

Uncover the centuries-long conquest of Spain

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The Battle of Inchon, 1950

FUTURE
ISSUE 093

KING & COUNTRY
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RAF085

Supermarine Spitfire Mk.II
610 Squadron 'County of Chester'

DIMENSIONS:
Length: 30.5 cm (12 1/4")
Wingspan: 39 cm (15 3/8")
Scale: 1:30

RAF072

RAF078

Spitfires For Sale

IN JUNE 1940, after the shock of defeat in France and the evacuation from Dunkirk, Britain stood alone and besieged by the military might of Nazi Germany.

Adolf Hitler now instructed his High Command to prepare ***'Operation Sea Lion'*** the invasion of Britain – for September 1940.

First however, he ordered his Luftwaffe to destroy the ***Royal Air Force*** in the air and on the ground.

Opposing the Luftwaffe's ***Me. 109s*** and *Heinkels* stood the heavily outnumbered squadrons of the R.A.F.'s ***Fighter Command*** with their own ***Spitfires*** and ***Hurricanes***, a handful of brave pilots and a few thousand dedicated, hard-working ground crew.

RAF084

To mark the *85th Anniversary* of the first flight of a ***Supermarine Spitfire*** on 5 March 1936, King & Country are releasing their latest *1:30 scale version* of this classic British fighter.

Our *'Battle of Britain'* ***Spitfire Mk.II*** is a highly detailed hand-painted, mixed media model *(polystone, resin and white metal)* in the markings of ***610 Squadron*** *'County of Chester'* of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force.

To accompany this historic aircraft King & Country has also made a whole range of 1:30 scale, all-metal, hand-painted R.A.F. pilots, groundcrew and support vehicles that are available individually or in small sets.

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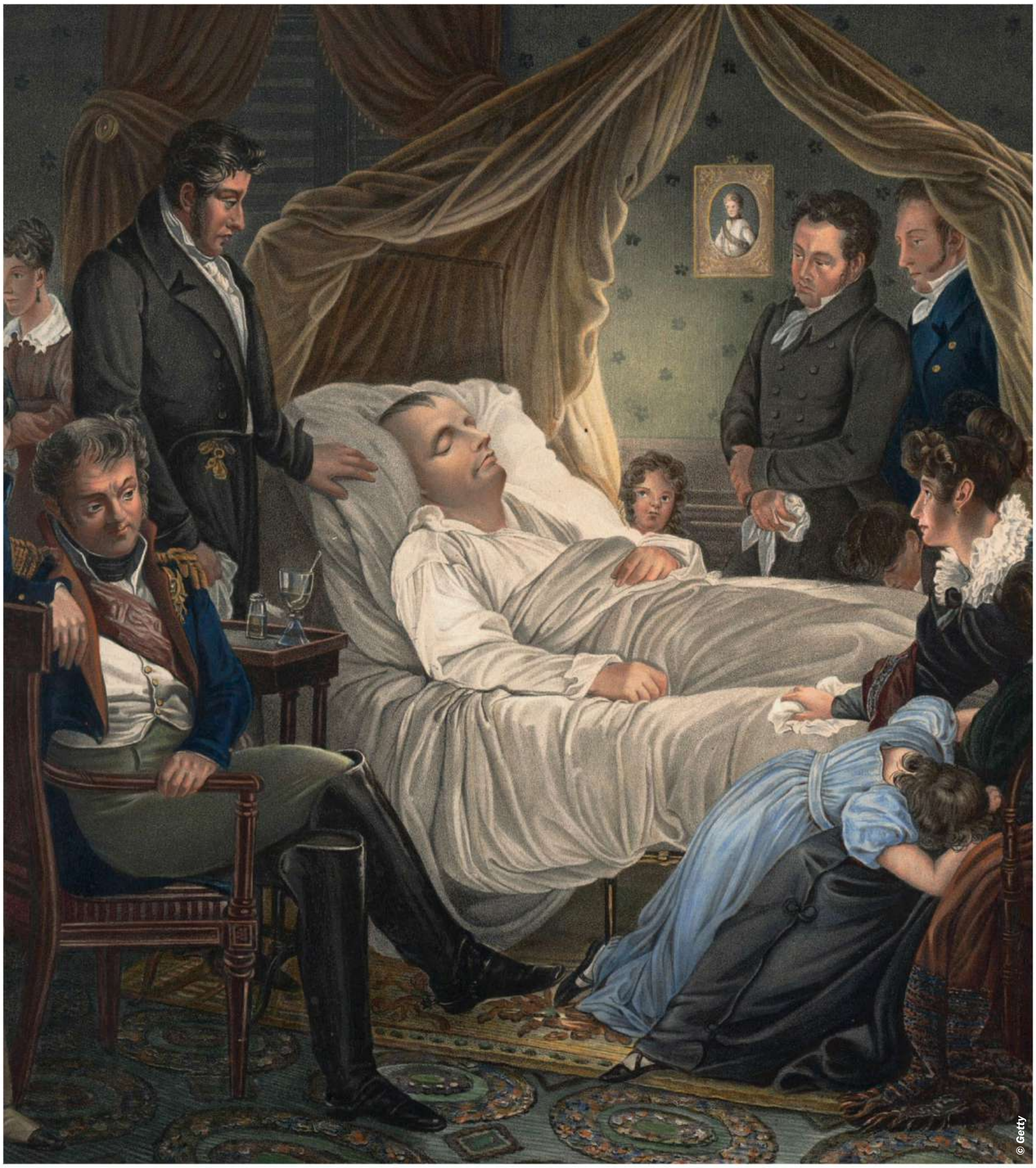
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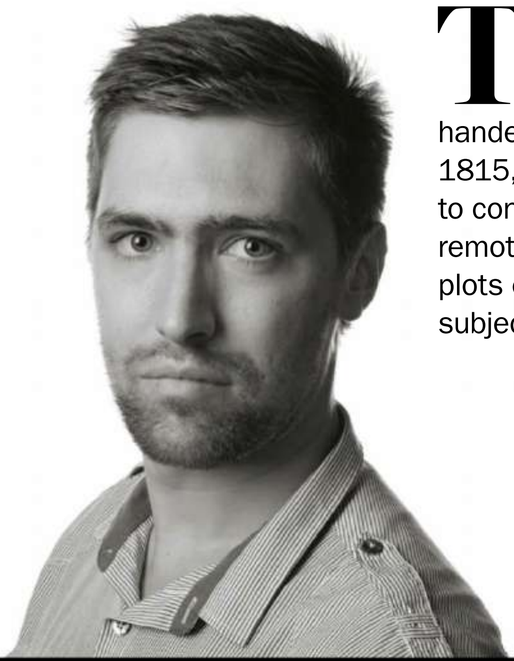
Above: Napoleon on his deathbed on the island prison of St Helena

Welcome



Two centuries ago this month, Napoleon Bonaparte died while exiled on an obscure island in the South Atlantic, St Helena. It was without doubt a pitiful end for a leader who had single-handedly changed the course of history. After his defeat at Waterloo in 1815, the emperor's second and final exile gave him years with which to contemplate his defeat, and write his own history. Despite the remoteness of the island prison, a range of daring and fanciful escape plots emerged over the years, and even Napoleon's death became the subject of controversy and conspiracy in the centuries since.

Tim

Tim Williamson
Editor-in-Chief

CONTRIBUTORS

SIR BRIAN UNWIN

The acclaimed author and historian spoke with History of War this issue. Over on page 29 he discusses the history of Napoleon's exile on St Helena, some of the bizarre escape plans to free him, and the controversy surrounding his death.

DR BERNARD WILKIN

Belgium-based father-son historian duo Bernard and René Wilkin return to History of War – this issue marking the bicentenary of Napoleon's death with a look into his journey from emperor to final exile on St Helena (p24).

OLIVIA SMITH

New to the History of War pages, Olivia is a public historian, researcher and expert on women's military history. Starting on page 54 she recalls the stories of five incredible women who hid their gender to fight on the frontline.

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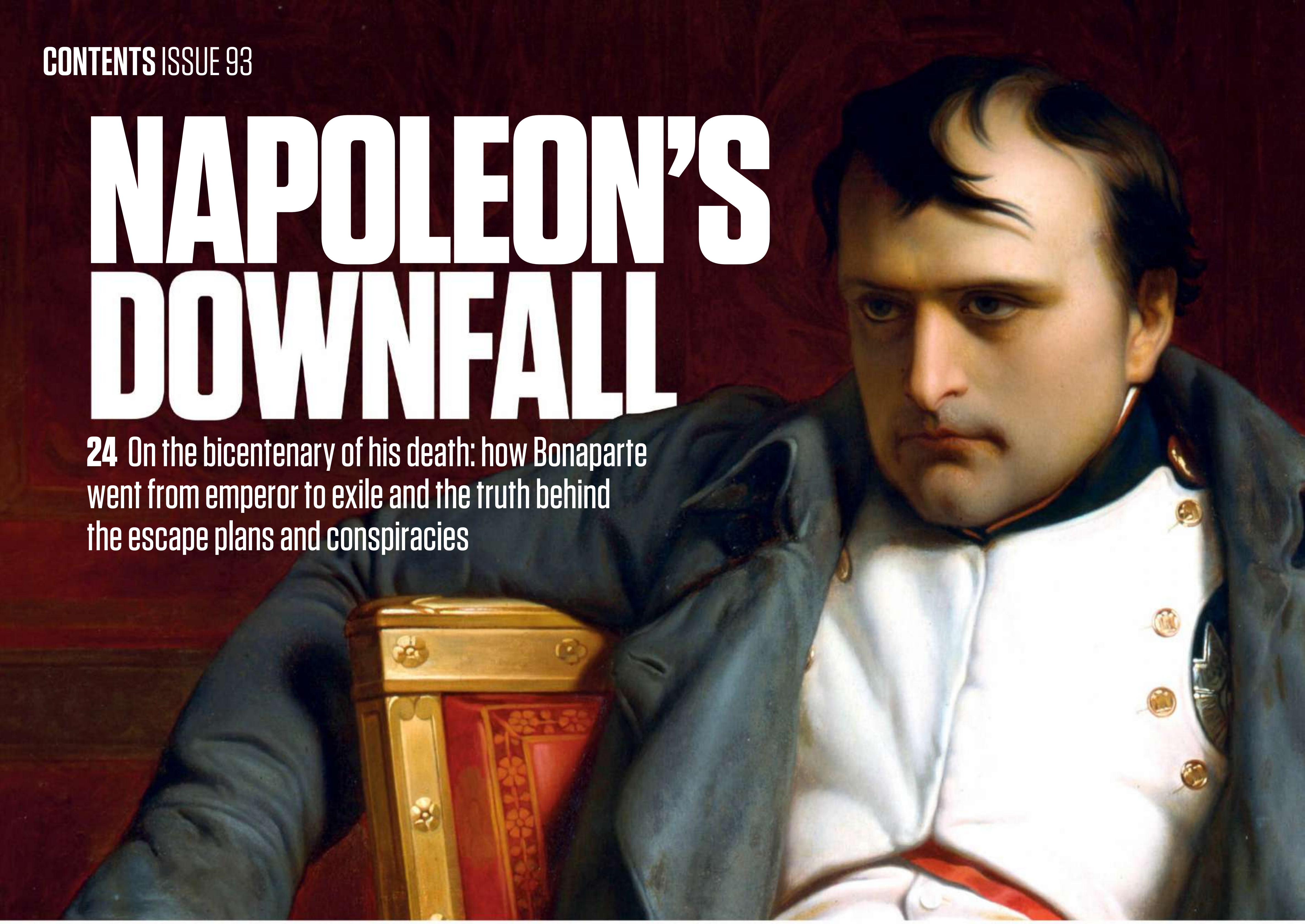
TURN TO PAGE 48

BRITAIN'S BEST MILITARY HISTORY MAGAZINE
HISTORY OF WAR
NAPOLEON'S DOWNFALL
RECONQUISTA



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For over a century Christian kingdoms waged a holy war against the Muslim rulers of the Iberian peninsula

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Christian kings and Muslim caliphs vied for control of Spain over the course of several decades

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This battle was a turning point in the conflict, as Christian rivals united to attack the Almohad Caliphate

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The name 'reconquista' was coined by the Christian conquerors themselves, but is it in fact propaganda?

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The almost mythic figure is a hero of Christian Spain, but in fact served both sides during the conflict

HEROES OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR

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A KAISER WITHOUT A KINGDOM

42 After the First World War, Wilhelm II watched from the sidelines as the world slipped into a new conflict

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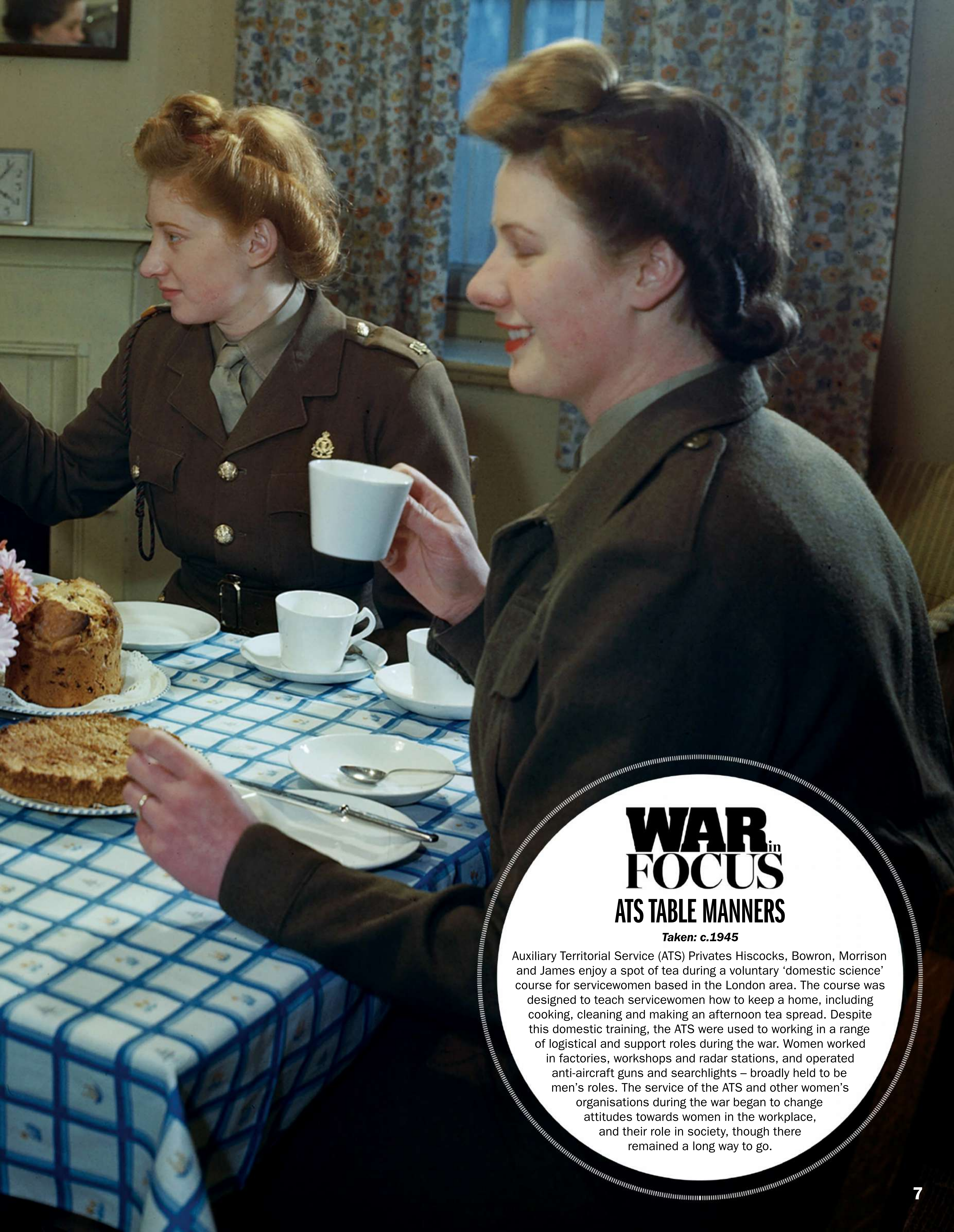


WAR in FOCUS

ATS TABLE MANNERS

Taken: c.1945

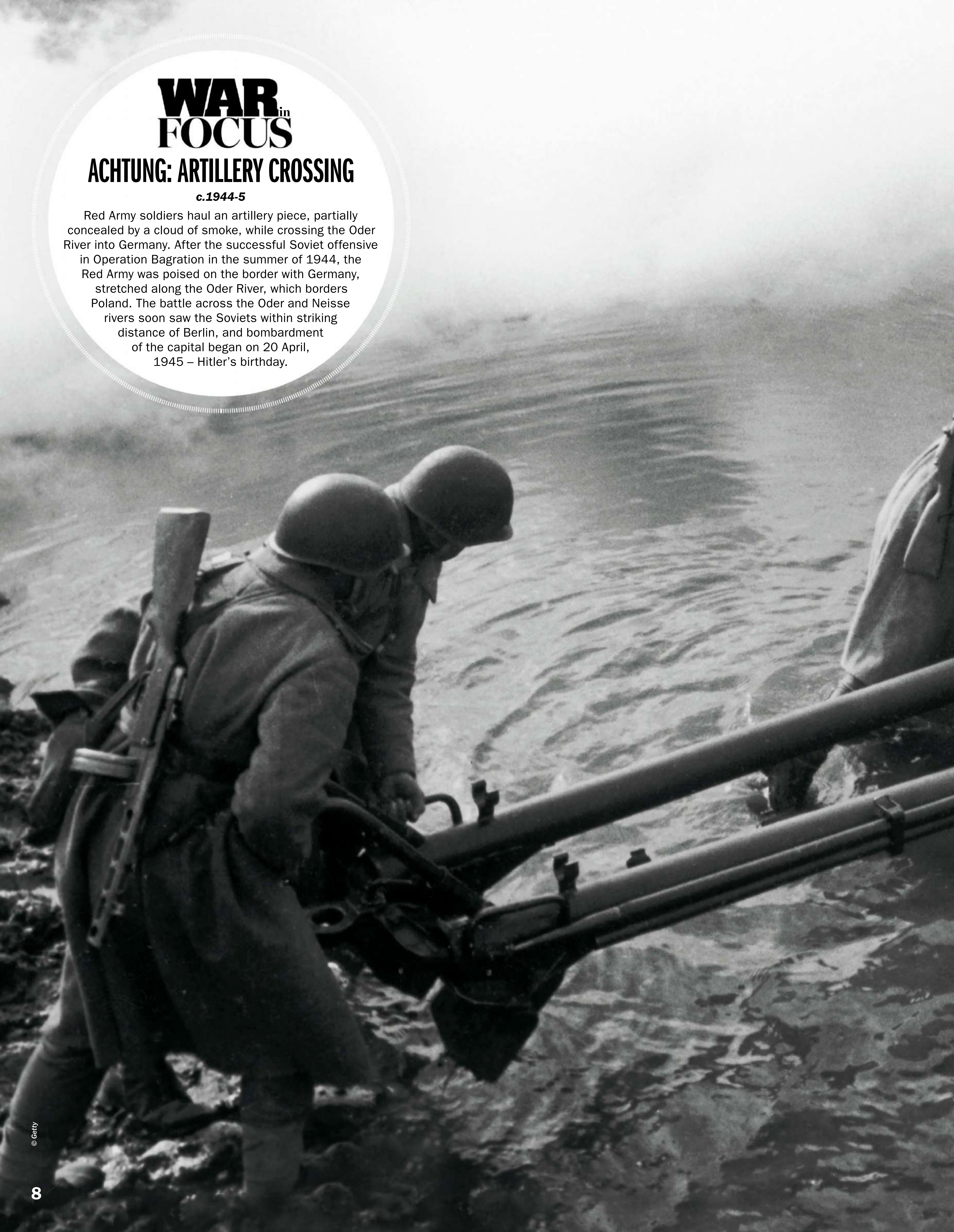
Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) Privates Hiscocks, Bowron, Morrison and James enjoy a spot of tea during a voluntary ‘domestic science’ course for servicewomen based in the London area. The course was designed to teach servicewomen how to keep a home, including cooking, cleaning and making an afternoon tea spread. Despite this domestic training, the ATS were used to working in a range of logistical and support roles during the war. Women worked in factories, workshops and radar stations, and operated anti-aircraft guns and searchlights – broadly held to be men’s roles. The service of the ATS and other women’s organisations during the war began to change attitudes towards women in the workplace, and their role in society, though there remained a long way to go.

WAR in FOCUS

ACHTUNG: ARTILLERY CROSSING

c.1944-5

Red Army soldiers haul an artillery piece, partially concealed by a cloud of smoke, while crossing the Oder River into Germany. After the successful Soviet offensive in Operation Bagration in the summer of 1944, the Red Army was poised on the border with Germany, stretched along the Oder River, which borders Poland. The battle across the Oder and Neisse rivers soon saw the Soviets within striking distance of Berlin, and bombardment of the capital began on 20 April, 1945 – Hitler's birthday.



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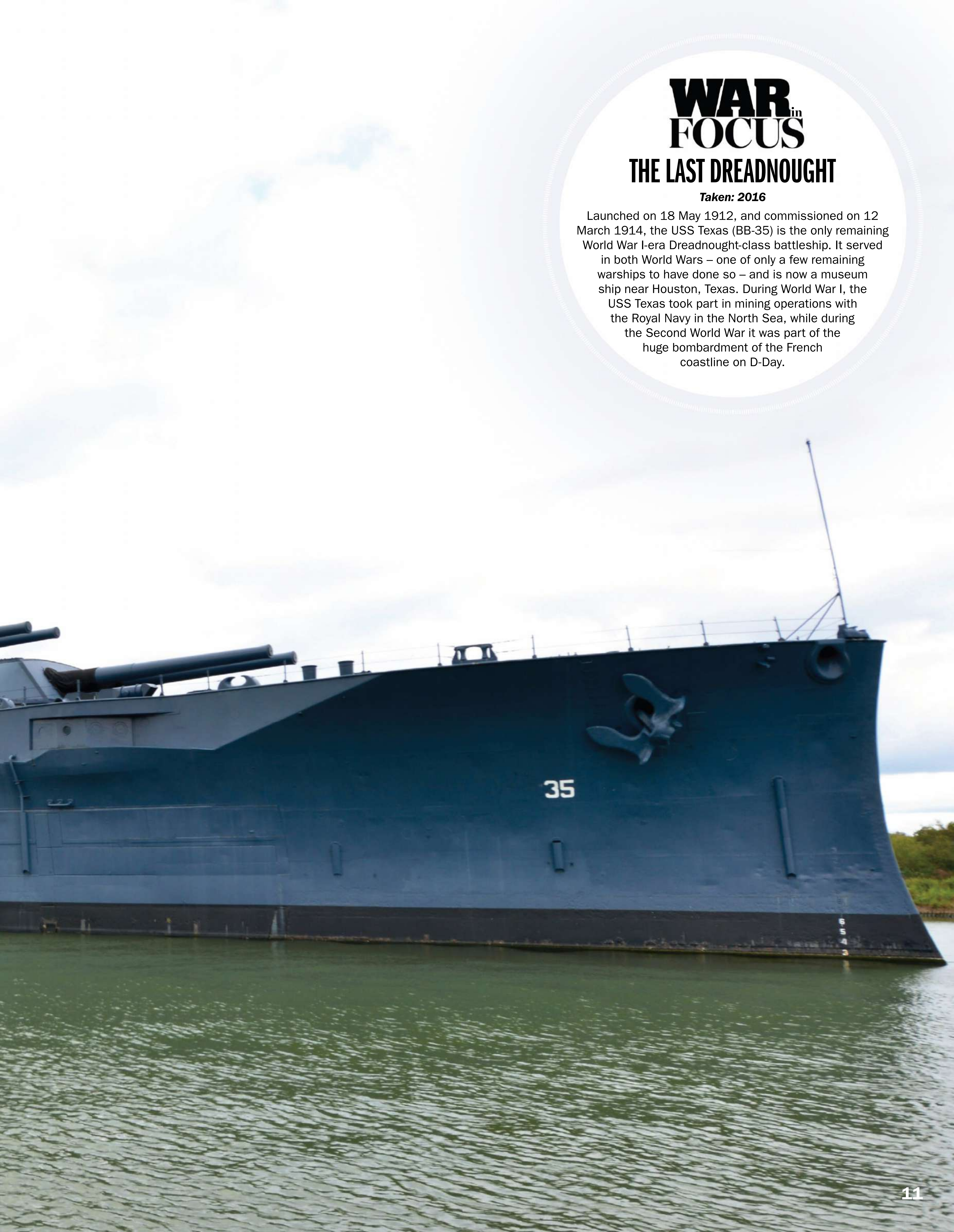


WAR in FOCUS

THE LAST DREADNOUGHT

Taken: 2016

Launched on 18 May 1912, and commissioned on 12 March 1914, the USS Texas (BB-35) is the only remaining World War I-era Dreadnought-class battleship. It served in both World Wars – one of only a few remaining warships to have done so – and is now a museum ship near Houston, Texas. During World War I, the USS Texas took part in mining operations with the Royal Navy in the North Sea, while during the Second World War it was part of the huge bombardment of the French coastline on D-Day.

TIMELINE OF THE...

RECONQUISTA

Small Christian kingdoms wrest control of Iberia from Islamic rulers in wars of 'Reconquest' that last for over 700 years

711-18

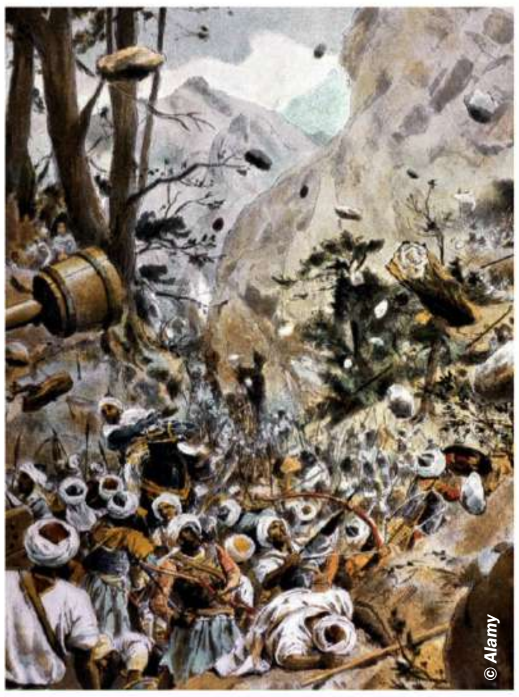
UMAYYAD CONQUEST OF HISPANIA

The Islamic Umayyad Caliphate invades Iberia. A Christian Visigoth king is defeated in battle and the new Umayyad province of Al-Andalus covers the vast majority of the peninsula. The Visigoths retreat and regroup into a small kingdom called Asturias in the far north of Spain.

c.718-22

BATTLE OF COVADONGA 01

A Visigoth nobleman called Pelagius of Asturias ambushes and defeats an Umayyad force in a mountain pass. Pelagius's victory leads to him becoming king of Asturias. Covadonga is regarded as the event that starts the Christian Reconquista ('Reconquest') of Spain.



Pelagius's soldiers hurl rocks at Umayyad forces at the Battle of Covadonga

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718-1139

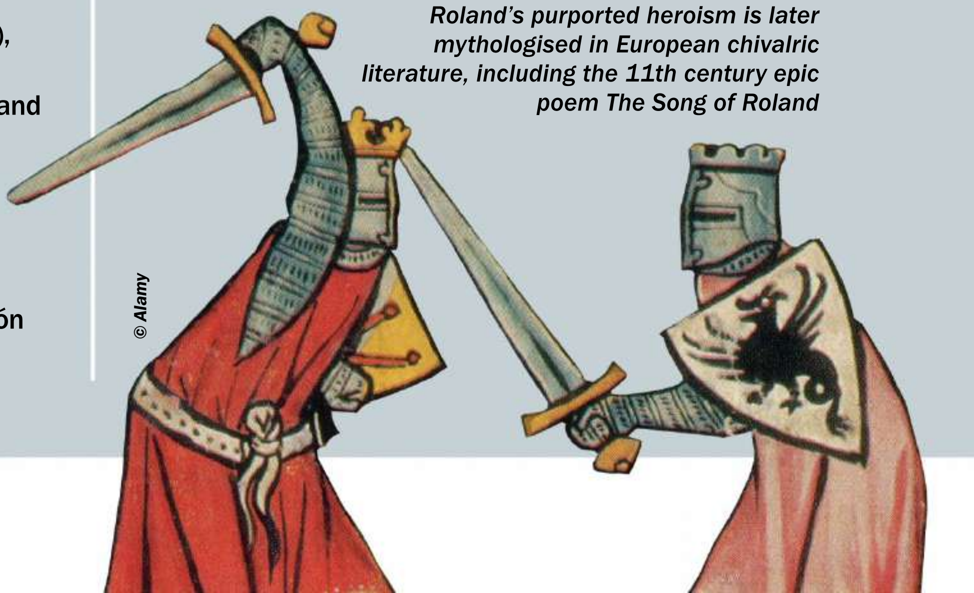
EXPANDING CHRISTIAN KINGDOMS

After the establishment of Asturias's monarchy, various Christian kingdoms are founded in Iberia, including Navarre (824), León (910), Aragon (1035), Castile (1037) and Portugal (1139). These kingdoms variously squabble and form alliances, with Aragon and Portugal and the later unified Castile-León dominating.

15 August 778

BATTLE OF RONCEVAUX PASS 02

Umayyad Al-Andalus splits into various emirates, with Muslim forces being unable to conquer southern France. Carolingian emperor Charlemagne then crosses the Pyrenees but his rear guard is ambushed and defeated on the return journey. The Frankish commander Roland is killed but his bravery is lionised as the epitome of medieval chivalry.



Roland's purported heroism is later mythologised in European chivalric literature, including the 11th century epic poem The Song of Roland

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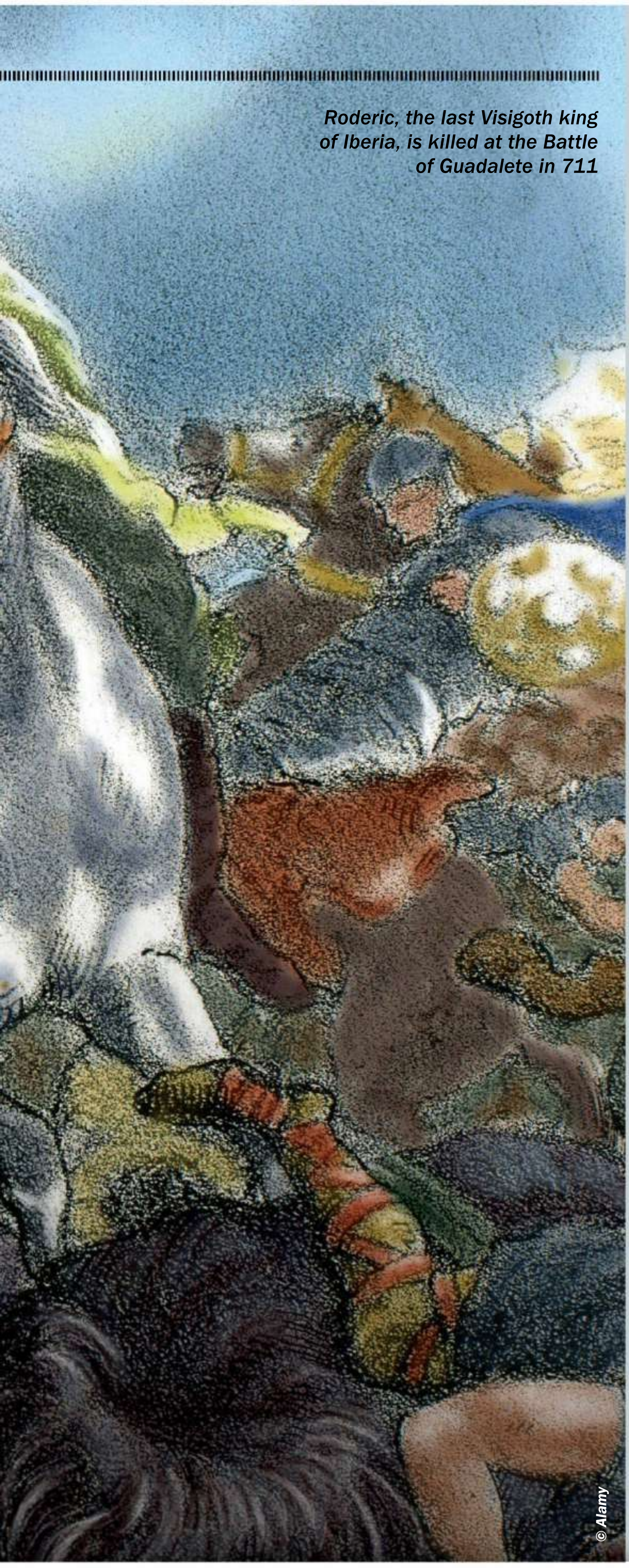
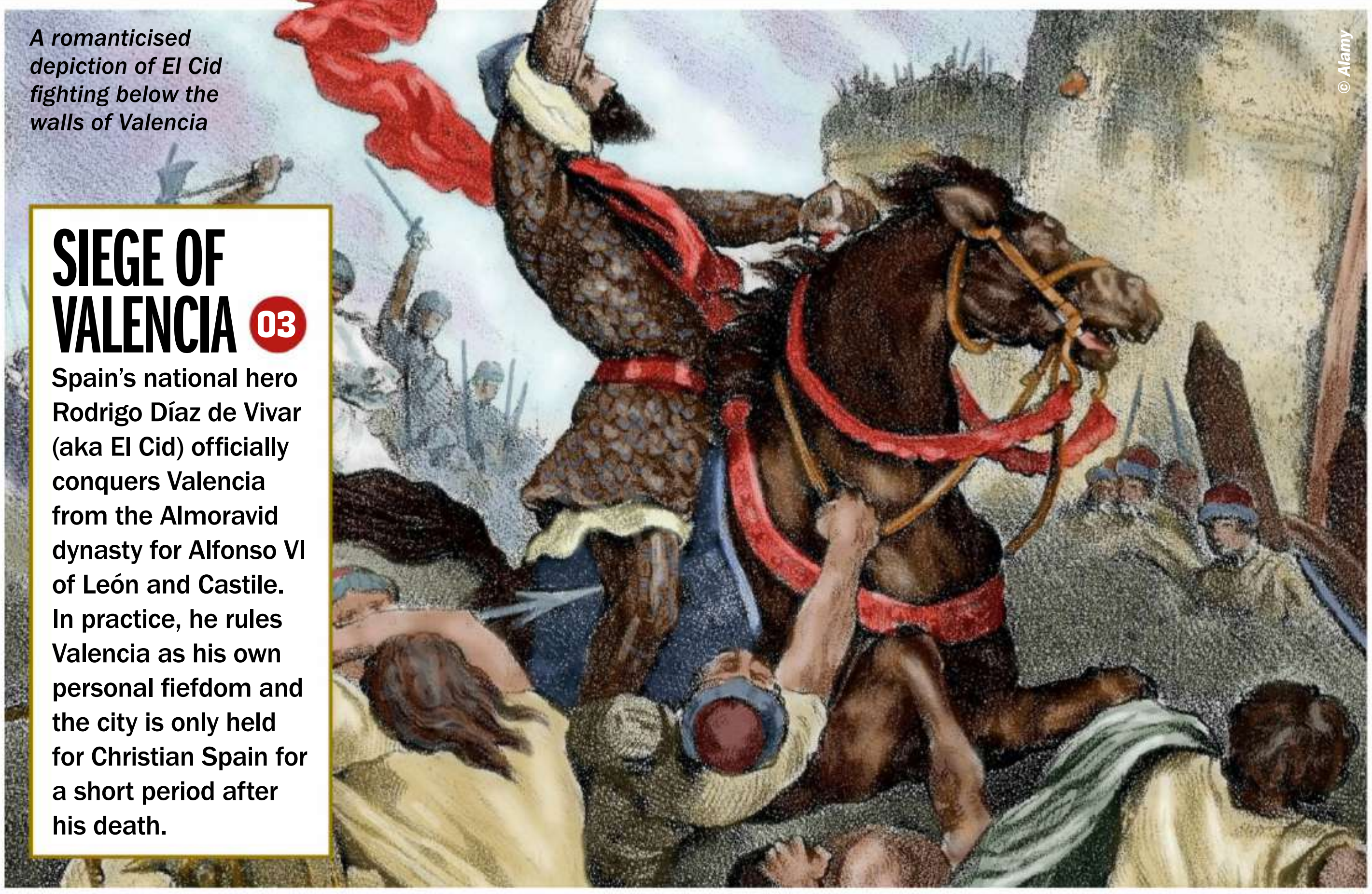


Roderic, the last Visigoth king of Iberia, is killed at the Battle of Guadalete in 711

© Alamy



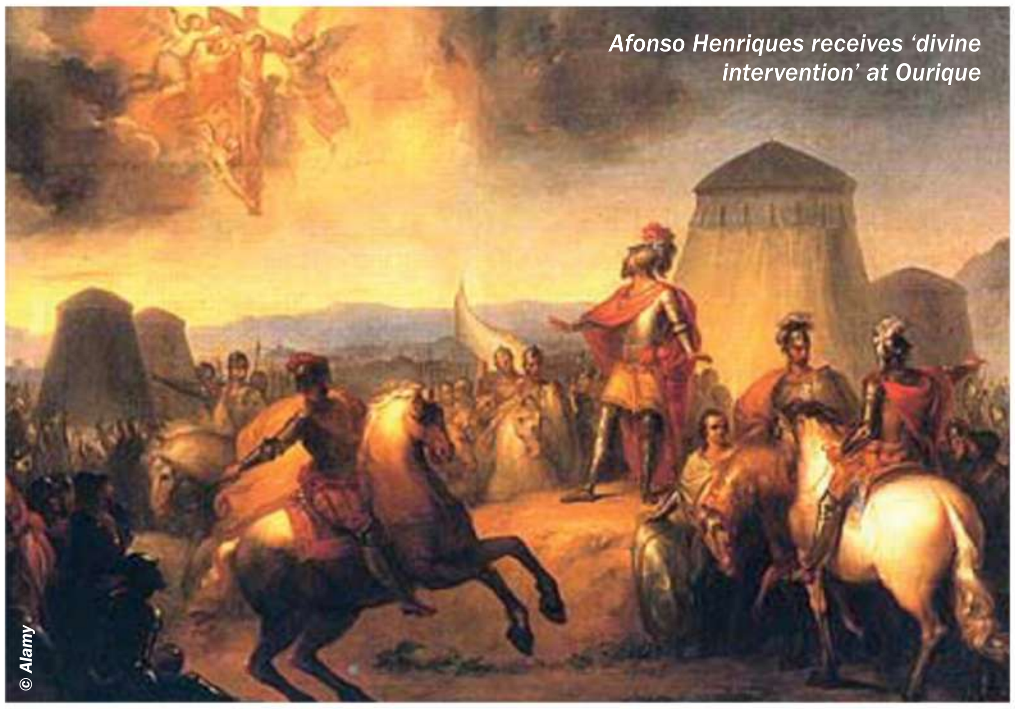
A romanticised depiction of El Cid fighting below the walls of Valencia

© Alamy

1092-94

SIEGE OF VALENCIA 03

Spain's national hero Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar (aka El Cid) officially conquers Valencia from the Almoravid dynasty for Alfonso VI of León and Castile. In practice, he rules Valencia as his own personal fiefdom and the city is only held for Christian Spain for a short period after his death.



Afonso Henriques receives 'divine intervention' at Ourique

© Alamy

25 July 1139

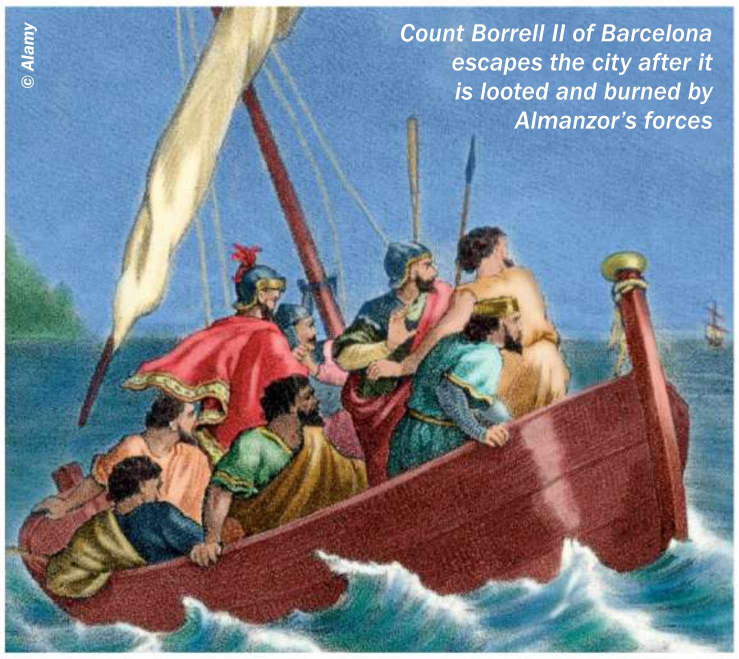
BATTLE OF OURIQUE 04

Afonso Henriques, Count of Portugal, defeats the Almoravid dynasty at Ourique. The battle is a pivotal moment in Portuguese history because Afonso is subsequently crowned as king of Portugal. It becomes the only Iberian Christian kingdom to not join what later becomes the kingdom of Spain.

977-1002

CAMPAIGNS OF ALMANZOR

Almanzor, the de facto ruler of Islamic Iberia, attacks northern Iberian Christian kingdoms in a series of campaigns. These are reprisals for the Christians not recognising his sovereignty and the results are devastating. Christian kingdoms are ravaged for decades, with Almanzor being continually victorious.



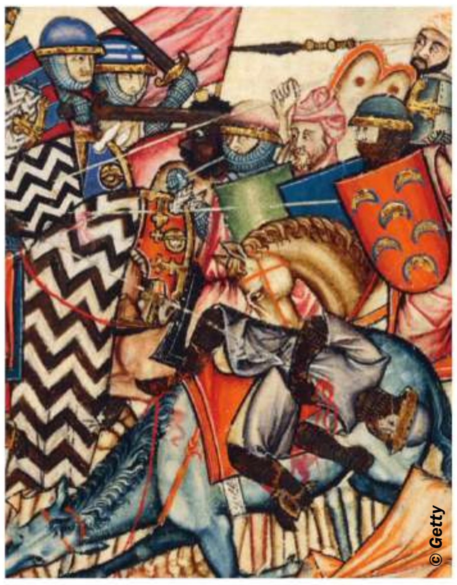
Count Borrell II of Barcelona escapes the city after it is looted and burned by Almanzor's forces

© Alamy

c.1095-1320

CRUSADER BATTLEGROUND

Medieval Crusades are not just confined to the Middle East but also Iberia, where the papacy encourages Christian knights to fight against the Muslims. The Knights Templar and the Orders of Calatrava, Montesa and Santiago are founded or called to fight on the peninsula, and many are awarded large territories in southern Spain.



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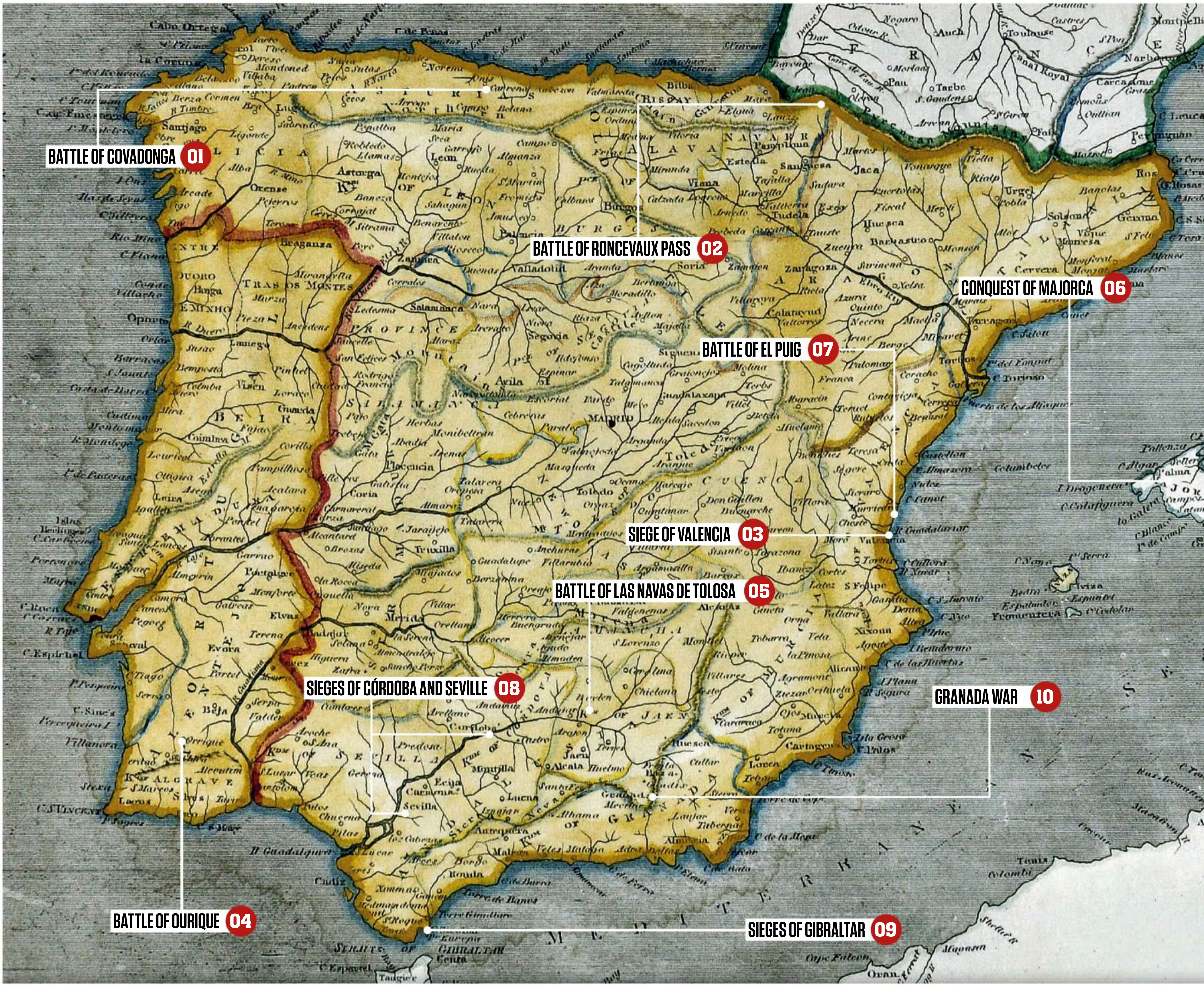
Crusaders fight Islamic forces in Spain in a 13th century book of poems called Cantigas de Santa Maria


BATTLE OF COVADONGA 01
BATTLE OF RONCEVAUX PASS 02
CONQUEST OF MAJORCA 06
BATTLE OF EL PUIG 07
SIEGE OF VALENCIA 03
BATTLE OF LAS NAVAS DE TOLOSA 05
SIEGES OF CÓRDOBA AND SEVILLE 08
GRANADA WAR 10
BATTLE OF OURIQUE 04
SIEGES OF GIBRALTAR 09

16 July 1212

BATTLE OF LAS NAVAS DE TOLOSA 05

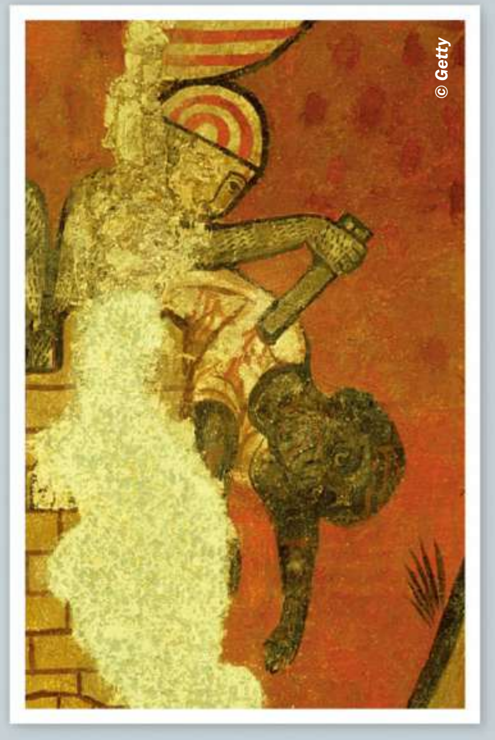
This battle is the culmination of crusading efforts. A Christian Crusader coalition led by Alfonso VIII of Castile defeats the Almohad Caliphate with the assistance of Sancho VII of Navarre, Pedro II of Aragon and various groups of crusading orders. The Almohads' crushing defeat sharply reduces Islamic power in Iberia.

The remains of a tent that belonged to Muhammad al-Nasir, caliph of the Almohads, that was supposedly recovered at Las Navas de Tolosa

1228-35

CONQUEST OF MAJORCA 06

Aragon leads a crusade to conquer the Balearic Islands, which is ruled by the Almohads. Majorca is the largest and most important island and it takes three years, until 1231, to pacify Islamic resistance. Menorca surrenders in the same year while Ibiza is taken in 1235. Aragon then amalgamates the islands into a vassal kingdom of Majorca.



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A detail from a fresco painted by an anonymous Arab artist that shows an African Moor being thrown from battlements by an Aragonese soldier during the conquest of Majorca

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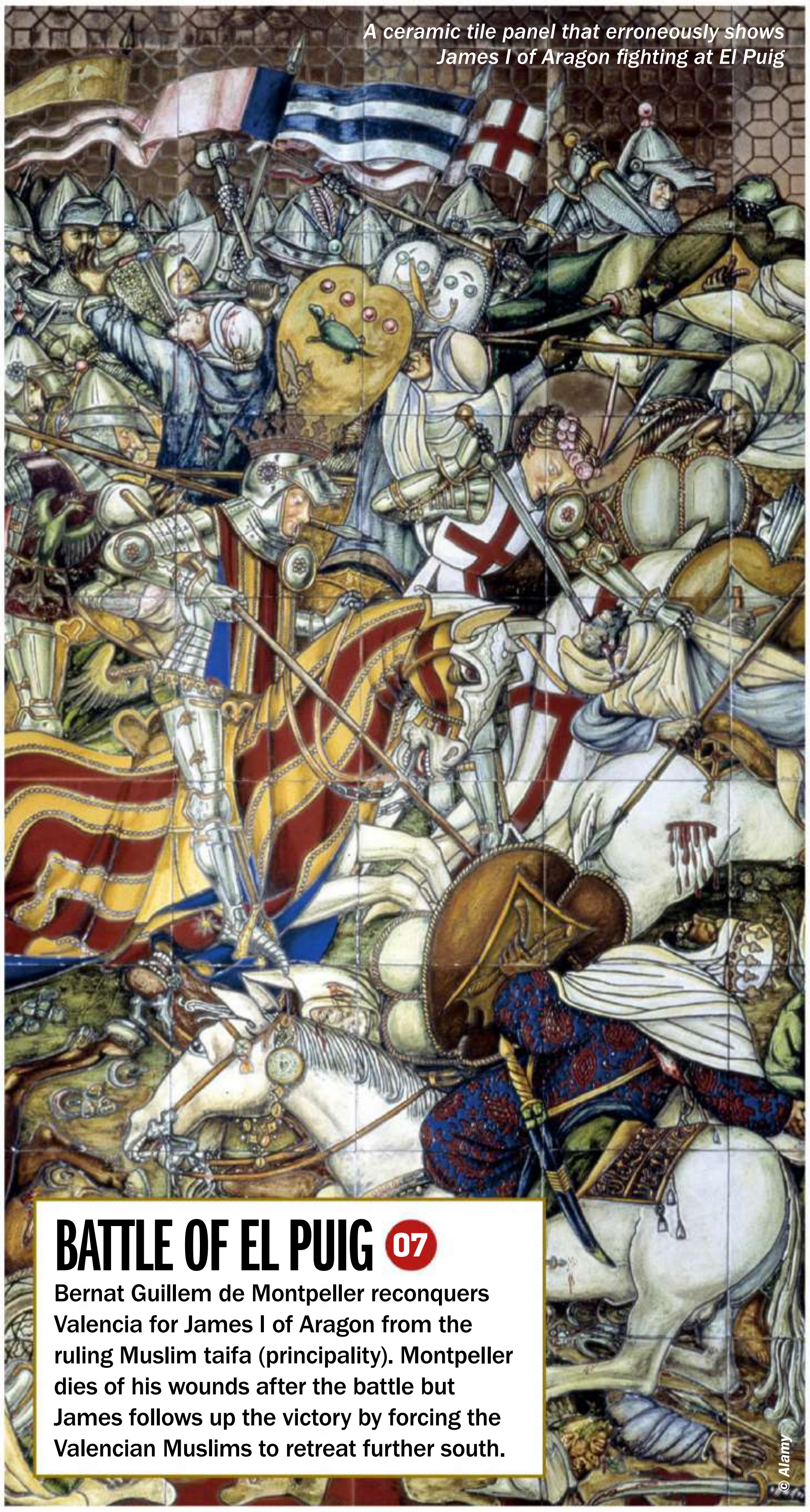


A ceramic tile panel that erroneously shows James I of Aragon fighting at El Puig

© Alamy

BATTLE OF EL PUIG 07

15 August 1237

Bernat Guillem de Montpeller reconquers Valencia for James I of Aragon from the ruling Muslim taifa (principality). Montpeller dies of his wounds after the battle but James follows up the victory by forcing the Valencian Muslims to retreat further south.

SIEGES OF CÓRDOBA AND SEVILLE 08

1236-48

Ferdinand III of Castile takes the city of Córdoba in a symbolic blow to Islamic Iberia, which has ruled there since its establishment by the Umayyad Caliphate in 711. Ferdinand follows this up with a successful 16-month siege of Seville. Only the Moorish emirate of Granada now retains an Islamic foothold in Spain.

© Alamy

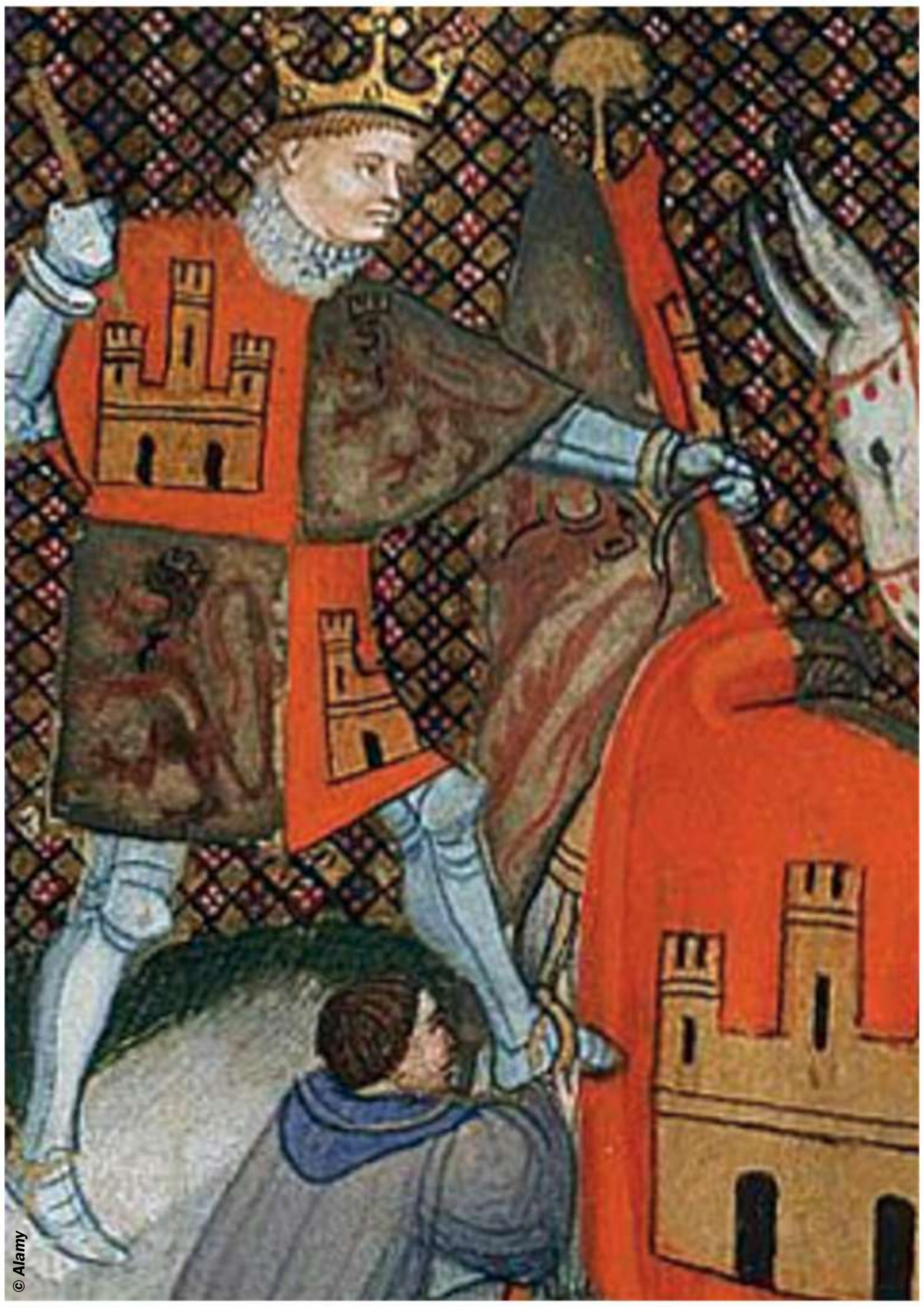
One of the buildings captured by Ferdinand III is the magnificent Great Mosque of Córdoba, which is subsequently turned into a cathedral

SIEGES OF GIBRALTAR 09

1309-1462

Gibraltar is besieged eight times in a power struggle between Castile and the Islamic powers of Granada and Morocco during the 14th-15th centuries. Castile finally gains controls of the famous rock, which becomes strategically important for the final defeat of Granada.

Alfonso XI of Castile commanded the fourth and fifth sieges of Gibraltar. The castle design in the Castilian flag now forms part of the current flag of Gibraltar



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GRANADA WAR 10

February 1482 – 2 January 1492

Castile and Aragon wage war on the emirate of Granada with a series of military campaigns. Granada's final capitulation on 2 January 1482 finally ends the Reconquista, with the marital union of Castile and Aragon forming a powerful Christian kingdom of Spain.

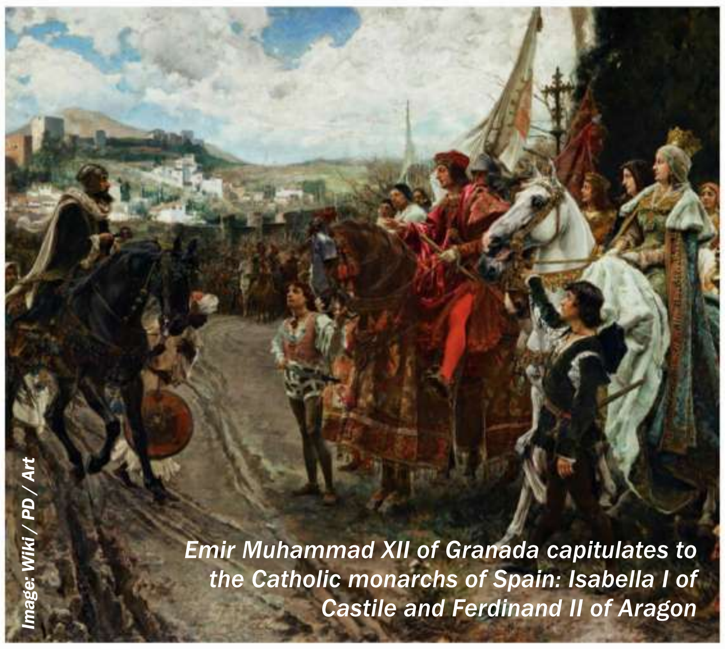


Image: Wiki / PD / Art

Emir Muhammad XII of Granada capitulates to the Catholic monarchs of Spain: Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon

RECONQUISTADORS

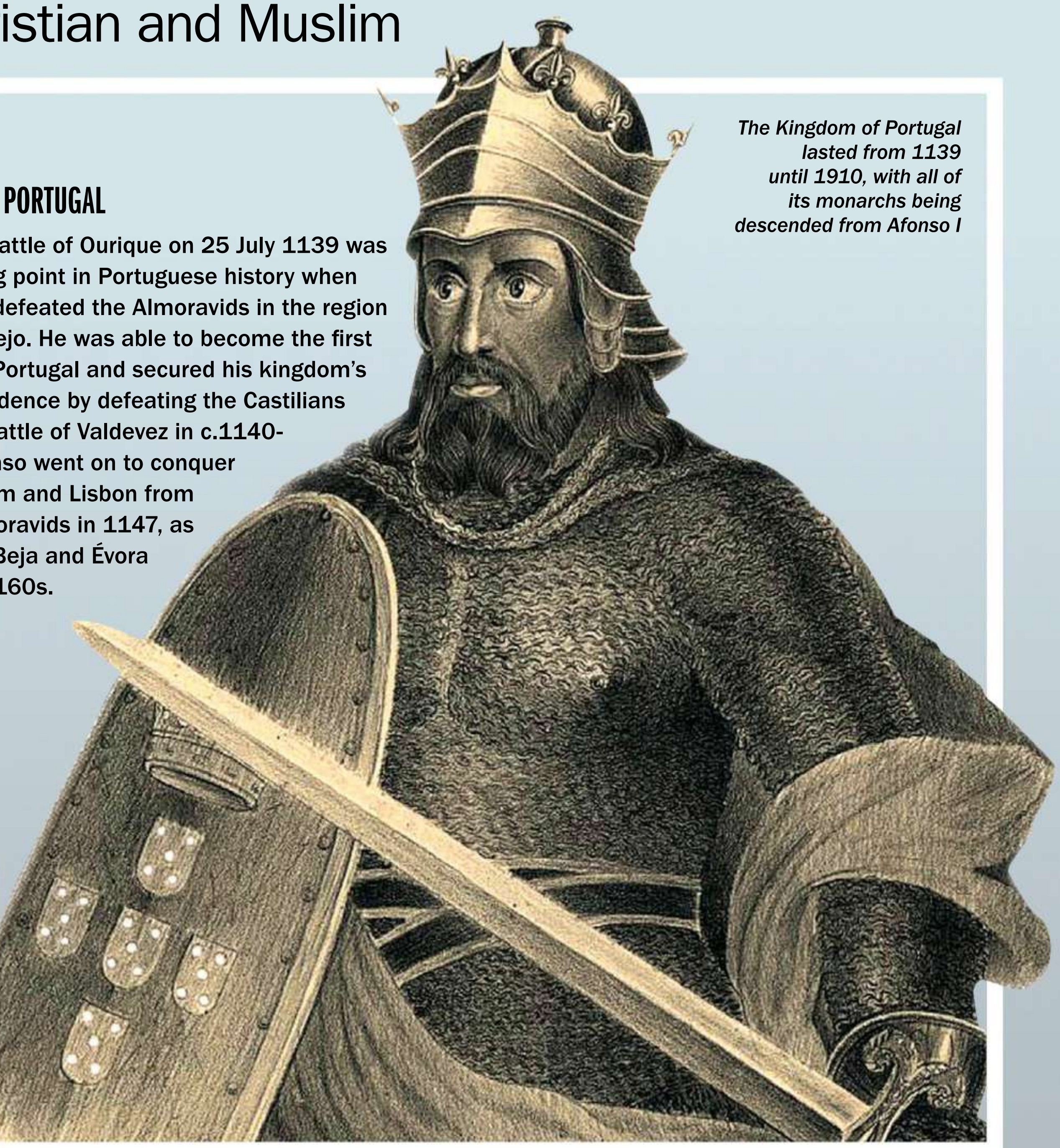
The Reconquista was defined by the military efforts of talented rulers across Iberia – both Christian and Muslim

AFONSO I

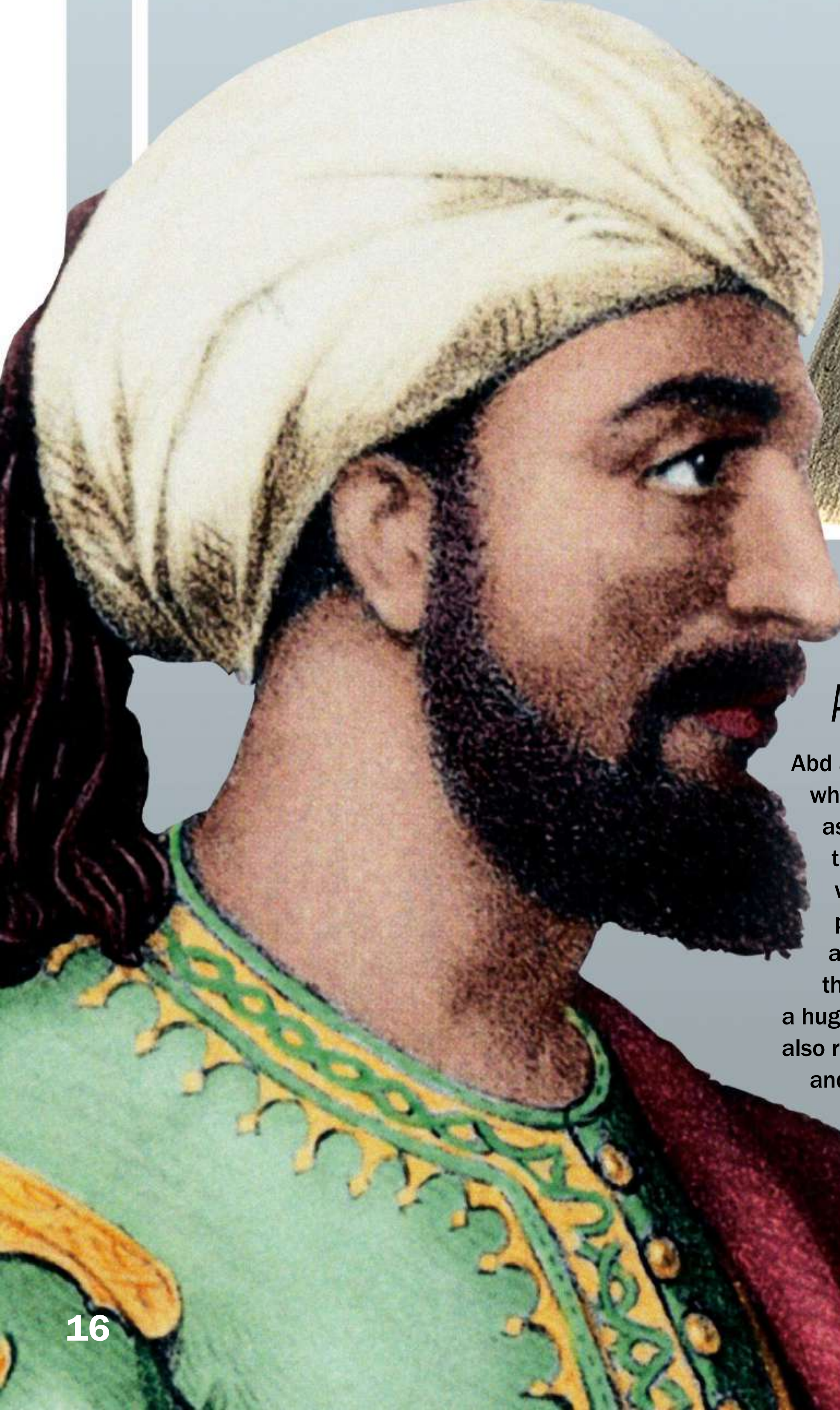
FOUNDER OF THE KINGDOM OF PORTUGAL C.1109-85 **PORTUGAL**

Until Afonso, Portugal was territorially split between a Christian county that owed allegiance to Castile-León and the Muslim Almoravid dynasty. Afonso's own maternal grandfather was Alfonso VI of Castile-León and he became count of Portugal as a child while his mother Teresa acted as regent. He first had to overcome his mother's resistance to his majority when he defeated her supporters at the Battle of São Mamede in 1128. Afonso then proclaimed himself as prince of Portugal before he turned his attention to defeating the Almoravids.

The Battle of Ourique on 25 July 1139 was a turning point in Portuguese history when Afonso defeated the Almoravids in the region of Alentejo. He was able to become the first king of Portugal and secured his kingdom's independence by defeating the Castilians at the Battle of Valdevez in c.1140-41. Afonso went on to conquer Santarém and Lisbon from the Almoravids in 1147, as well as Beja and Évora in the 1160s.



The Kingdom of Portugal lasted from 1139 until 1910, with all of its monarchs being descended from Afonso I



ABD AL-RAHMAN III

THE MIGHTY UMAYYAD WHO CHECKED THE RECONQUISTA AND RULED AN ENLIGHTENED CALIPHATE 891-961 **CÓRDOBA**

Abd al-Rahman was the first caliph of Córboda, which he founded in 929 after previously ruling as the Umayyad emir. He became known as the greatest Umayyad ruler in Iberia and was the first to form a caliphate on the peninsula. A great patron of the arts and architecture, Abd al-Rahman contributed to the Great Mosque of Córdoba and constructed a huge palace-city at Medina Azahara. He was also religiously tolerant of Christians and Jews, and such was his fame that he received emissaries from the Holy Roman and Byzantine emperors.

Much of Abd al-Rahman's success was because he was largely able to hold back the Christian Reconquista. He won a significant battle against León and Navarre at Valdejunquera in 920 before sacking the Navarrese capital of Pamplona in 924. Abd al-Rahman was almost killed after being defeated by León at Simancas in 939 but this Christian success was never followed up. The caliph proceeded to take advantage of Christian infighting to the point where the kings of León and Navarre both paid homage to him in 958.

Despite his significant achievements as caliph, Abd al-Rahman once wrote that he had only ever known 14 days of pure happiness in his life

Images © Alamy unless otherwise stated

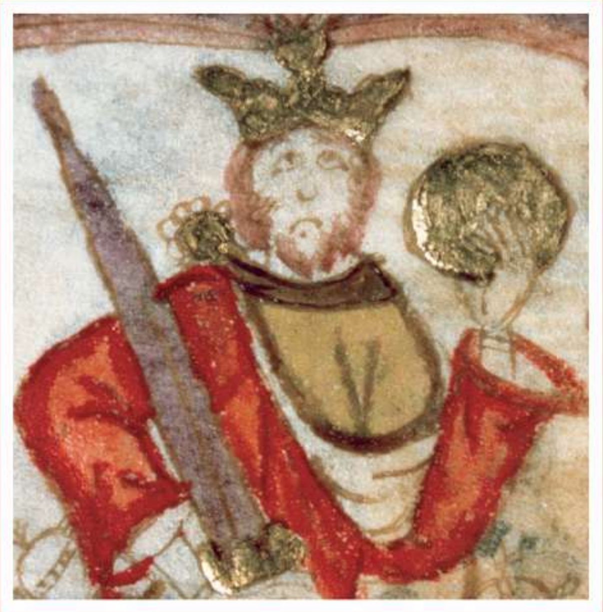
PELAGIUS

THE VISIGOTH WHO BEGAN THE RECONQUISTA AND PARTIALLY FOUNDED THE SPANISH MONARCHY

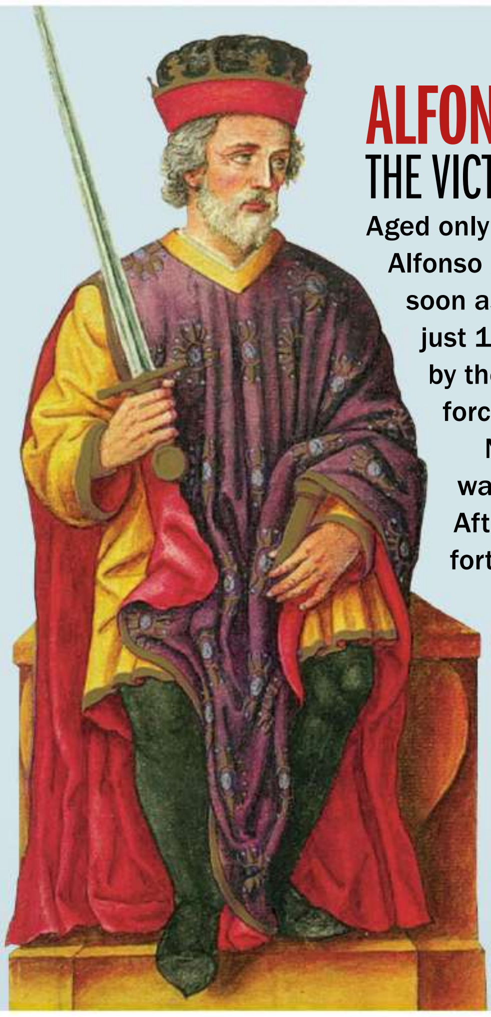
C.685-737 **ASTURIAS**

The Visigothic Kingdom was a Germanic Christian successor state to Roman rule in most of Iberia from 418 until the Umayyad Conquest of Hispania during 711-18. Christian Visigoths held out in the mountain region of Asturias in northwest Spain, including Pelagius, who became their leader. He was a nobleman who survived the Visigothic defeat at the Battle of Guadalete in 711 as well as being captured and imprisoned by the Umayyads.

From c.717-18, Pelagius was elected as the principal leader in Asturias and won the Battle of Covadonga against the Umayyads, which is considered the first engagement of the Reconquista. A king in all but name, Pelagius established the capital of Asturias at Cangas de Onís, with his kingdom surviving until 925. From that time, the expanding Asturias became known as the kingdom of León, which eventually unified with Castile to form a powerful Christian state. Because Castile-León ultimately united with Aragon to form the kingdom of Spain, Pelagius is considered a founding father of the Spanish monarchy.



A medieval miniature portrait of Pelagius that's now held in the National Library of Spain in Madrid



ALFONSO VIII

THE VICTOR OF LAS NAVAS DE TOLOSA 1155-1214 **CASTILE**

Aged only two years old when he succeeded to the Castilian throne, Alfonso grew up surrounded by competing factions. Nevertheless, he soon asserted control of his throne when he reached his majority at just 15. Despite his diplomatic skills, Alfonso was decisively defeated by the Almohads at the Battle of Alarcos in July 1195, with Castilian forces abandoning Trujillo, Montánchez and Talavera.

Navarre and León invaded Castile in the same year but Alfonso was able to defeat them thanks to a strong alliance with Aragon. After many years of stalemate, he achieved a great reversal of fortune when Pope Innocent III called for a Crusade against the Almohads. Alfonso led a coalition consisting of Castile, Aragon, Navarre and several crusading orders to victory at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212. This decisive clash swiftly led to a decline in Almohad power in Iberia and is considered a critical turning point of the Reconquista.

Left: *Alfonso VIII founded the first university in Spain at Palencia, although it was short-lived*

Right: *A modernist statue of Almanzor in Algeciras, Andalusia*

ALMANZOR

A CUNNING POLITICIAN WHO LAUNCHED MANY CAMPAIGNS AGAINST CHRISTIAN KINGDOMS 938-1002 **CÓRDOBA**

Almanzor's real name was Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Abi Amir al-Ma 'afiri, although he was sometimes nicknamed al-Mansur ('the Victorious'). Born in Andalusia to a rural family of Yemeni Arab origin, Almanzor learned Islamic law and rose through the ranks of the Caliphate of Córdoba. When Caliph Al-Hakam II died in 976 Almanzor became the chamberlain for Hisham II, but became de facto ruler of Córdoba while reducing his master's role to little more than a figurehead.

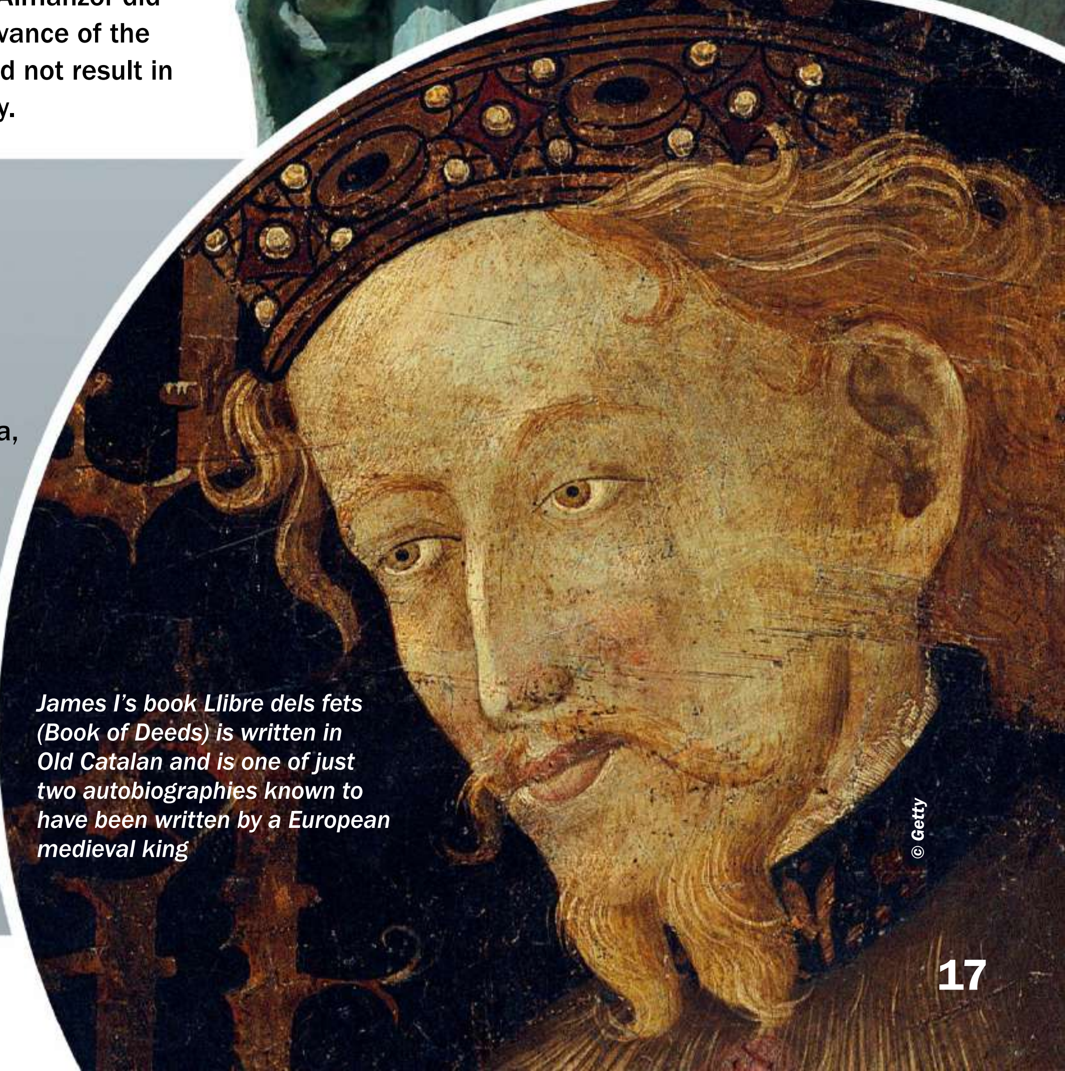
A champion of Islam, Almanzor launched many campaigns against the Christian kingdoms of northern Spain. He reputedly took his books as well as personal weapons on campaigns, but his attacks were highly destructive. Among his victories were the temporary captures of León, Pamplona, Barcelona and Santiago de Compostela. He notoriously burned the latter's cathedral, with looting and the taking of slaves being commonplace. Almanzor did temporarily halt the general advance of the Reconquista but his victories did not result in the regaining of Islamic territory.

JAMES I

THE 'CONQUEROR' KING WHO GREATLY EXPANDED THE TERRITORY OF ARAGON 1208-76 **ARAGON**

Largely raised by the Knights Templar, James became king of Aragon aged only five years old in 1213. His minority was tough and he survived several kidnappings and assassination plots. However, his military upbringing paid dividends upon his majority when he conquered Majorca from the Almohads in 1229. He wrote of his conquest: "God has given us a kingdom inside the sea, a thing that no king of Spain has ever achieved before."

The rest of the Balearic Islands were fully conquered by the mid-1230s, followed by the capture of Valencia in 1238. This included a preliminary siege at Burriana, where the king took the fortress by using underground tunnels. James also gained control of Barcelona and continued to war in Murcia, with his impressive victories giving him the title of 'the Conqueror'. Thanks to James's campaigns, the majority of Spain's eastern coast came under Christian control, with a further presence in the western Mediterranean Sea.



James I's book Llibre dels fets (Book of Deeds) is written in Old Catalan and is one of just two autobiographies known to have been written by a European medieval king

© Getty

THE BATTLE OF LAS NAVAS DE TOLOSA

In 1212, as religious tensions boiled over, the Christians of northern Spain set aside their differences to deal the Almohad Caliphate a critical defeat

In the 12th century, the Muslim Berber Almohad Caliphate emerged from Morocco's Atlas Mountains into southern Andalusia, uniting the various Muslim principalities that had once been part of the collapsed Almoravid dynasty. With their Maghreb power base in Marrakesh and an Andalusian capital in Seville, under the leadership of Caliph Yaqub Al Mansur, the Almohads ushered in a brief architectural, trade, scientific and intellectual renaissance.

Their path was made easier by infighting among the Christian kingdoms of northern Iberia. Ferdinand II of León and his son Alfonso IX both allied with the Almohads to stave off the threats of Portugal and Castile. However, after suffering a catastrophic loss to the caliphate at the 1195 Battle of Alarcos, King Alfonso VIII of Castile began a campaign to unite the Christians against what he saw as a common enemy.

Together with the Bishop of Toledo, he worked to convince Pope Innocent III of the urgent need to defend the western borders of Christendom. They built a propaganda campaign around Caliph Yaqub's successor, Muhammad Al Nasir, claiming he had vowed to "seize all of Europe, transform the porch of St Peters into a stable for his horses and establish his banner in the top". In the midst of this diplomatic whirlwind, in October 1211, Alfonso and his main power rival Pedro II of Aragón joined forces and began raiding Andalusian holdings.

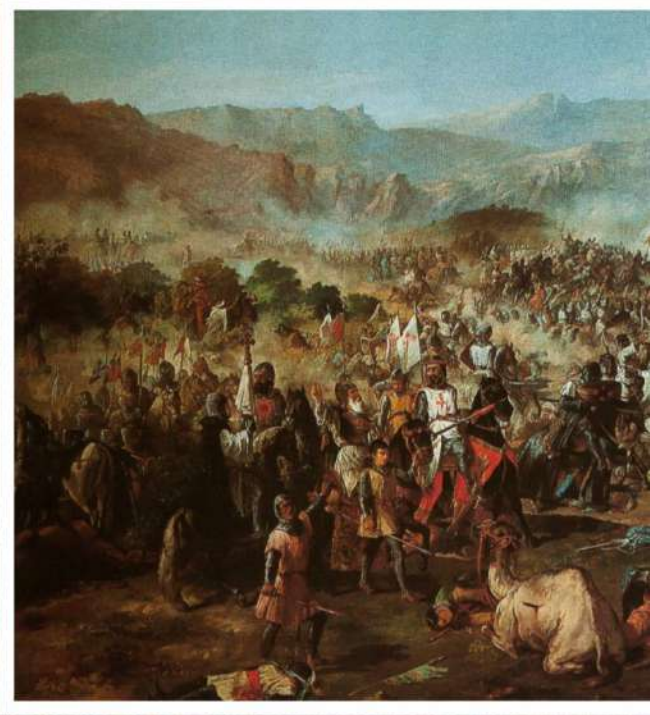
When news reached the 19-year-old caliph in Marrakesh, he immediately set off at the head of a great army. However, on the eve of his departure a fire wiped out the capital's supplies in what many viewed as an ill omen. Undeterred, he crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and seized the powerful fortress of Salvatierra, prompting the pope to finally call a formal Crusade, with indulgences promised to all volunteers. Knights poured into Toledo from across the northern Iberian kingdoms of Castile, Aragón and Navarre, as well as from France and the Knights Templar.

Al Nasir's 1,500km march north was plagued with problems. With food increasingly sparse and payments long-overdue, after a year-and-a-half the men had just about had enough. Things were not much better up north where, just weeks into their campaign, after taking the fortress of Calatrava, either fed up of the heat or the lack of pillaging, 40,000 French volunteers abandoned the Crusade. To make matters worse, as the Christians worked south they found the Almohads had blocked off every conceivable route. Just as all hope seemed lost, one night a shepherd appeared rather miraculously and led the Christians down a hidden pass, straight into the Muslims' camp on the plains outside Las Navas de Tolosa, or Al Iqab.

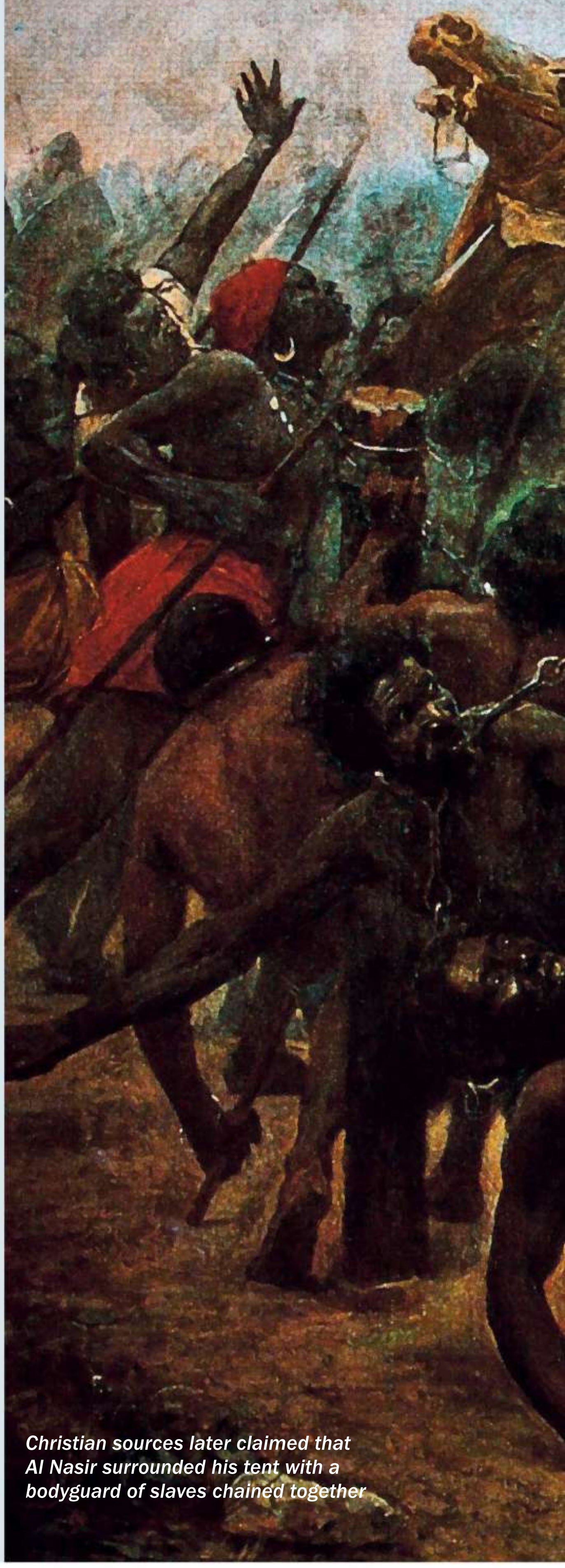
Shocked, the Al Nasir quickly organised his army into a square formation, with spearmen on all flanks guarding the javelinmen and stone slingers. Behind them were the archers, with a cavalry core at the heart. This would allow them to break the Christian cavalry charge and then open up corridors for their own horsemen to counter-attack. With 2,000 knights and 10,000 other warriors, Alfonso looked on in horror at an army that was clearly at least twice the size of his. Martyrdom looked far more likely than conquest. However, as soon as the Christian shock troops thundered into the Almohad camp, scores of the disgruntled Almohad fled.

Unable to counter-attack, Al Nasir's elite cavalry and infantrymen alike were drawn into the desperate fray, battling in a crush of lances, swords and battle-axes. Sensing the tide turn, Alfonso seized the initiative, smashing his cavalry straight into the heart of Al Nasir's line. With the Almohad flanks left exposed, Aragón and Navarre impaled the left and right flanks with their lances, tearing Al Nasir's army apart and sending them on a chaotic rout.

While the Crusader boasts of killing 100,000 Almohads were most certainly an exaggeration, it was a defeat from which Al Nasir could not recover. He retreated with his tail between his legs to Marrakesh, where he died under suspicious circumstances. Before long, the caliphate would once again splinter, allowing the Crusaders to divide and conquer their way through southern Iberia. Although Muslim rule would continue for another 200 years in the Emirate of Granada, the battle marked the beginning of the end of Islam's dominance over the Iberian peninsula.

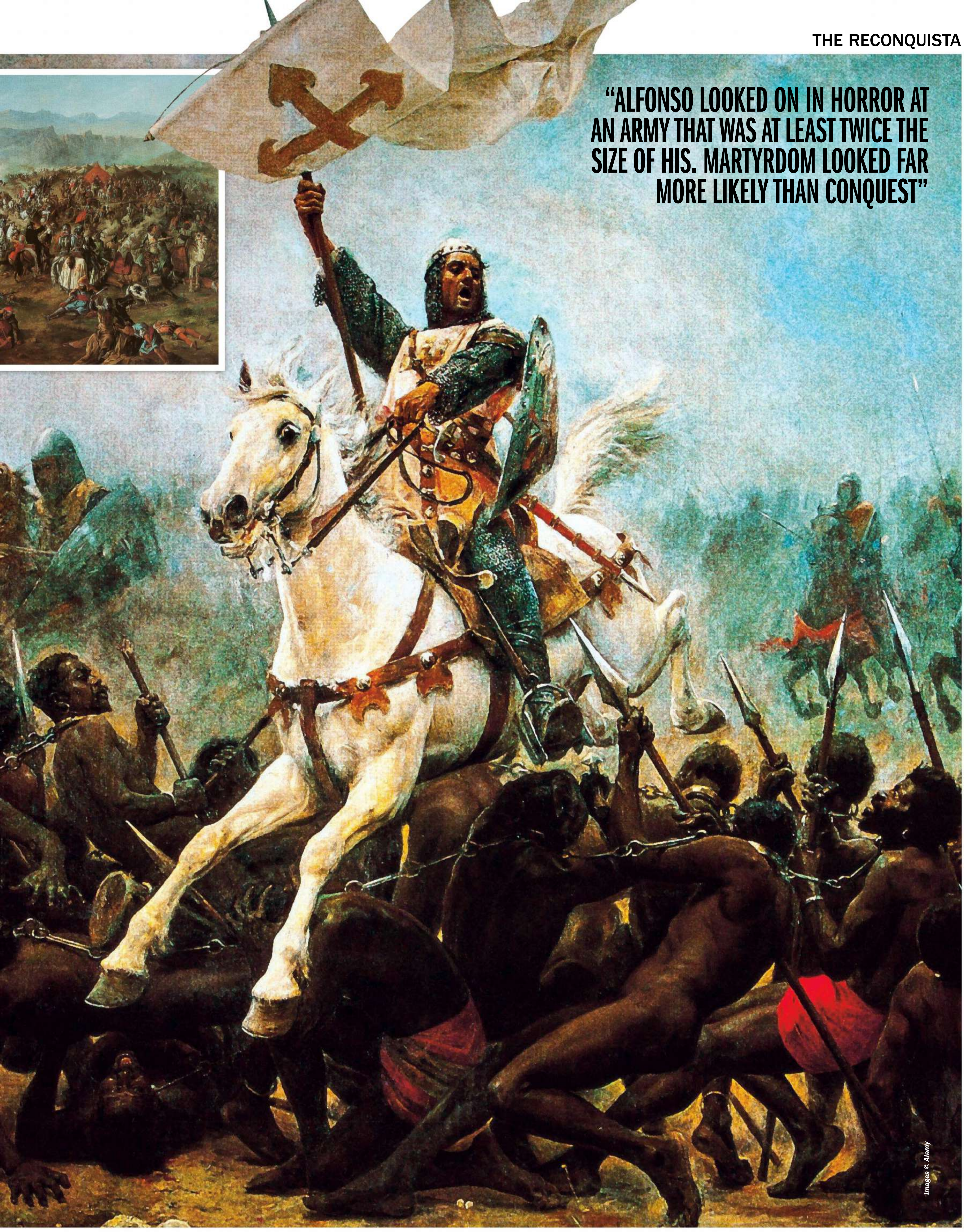


***Above:** Although the Christians were outnumbered, morale was so low among Almohad soldiers that many fled at first sight of the enemy*



Christian sources later claimed that Al Nasir surrounded his tent with a bodyguard of slaves chained together

> “ALFONSO LOOKED ON IN HORROR AT AN ARMY THAT WAS AT LEAST TWICE THE SIZE OF HIS. MARTYRDOM LOOKED FAR MORE LIKELY THAN CONQUEST”



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RECONQUISTA WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Spain's Christian conquerors immortalised their victories as the righteous restoration of Christian rule, but was this narrative religious propaganda used to alienate Spain from its Muslim heritage?

The Emirate of Granada's surrender in 1492 marked the formal end of Muslim rule on the Iberian Peninsula. Soon after, the conquerors began forced conversions of Muslims, culminating in the expulsion of all Muslims and Jews from Spain. The Christian victors celebrated their success as a moral victory, dubbed the Reconquista, or 'Reconquest', of Spain, which British historian David Nicolle calls "a classic case of history being written by the winning side". For centuries, he adds, the Muslim period was written off as an "alien interlude", a narrative that academics have increasingly begun to question.

To understand the issue, it's important to first look at the nature of the original Muslim conquest. The Visigothic king of Hispania and Septimania first adopted the Catholic faith in 589. When King Witiza died in 710, his successor Roderic was seen to have usurped the throne for himself. Early Arab chronicles suggest that Roderic's enemies invited the Umayyads to invade Spain. Though this claim is debatable, Roderic was a deeply unpopular figure, which played a huge role in the Umayyad's ability to sweep through and conquer Spain in matter of seven years. Jews, who had undergone intense persecution under Christian rule, may very well have welcomed the Muslims as liberators. In the aftermath, the Visigoths fled to the north, where they founded new Christian kingdoms.

In the ensuing eight centuries, the Iberian Peninsula became a fluid entity, with waves of power lapping between Muslim and Christian rule. In Muslim areas, in keeping with tradition set by the earliest Rashidun Caliphate, non-Muslims such as Christians and Jews could practise their faith freely so long as they paid the jizyah non-Muslim tax. Over time, the population of Andalusia grew into a diverse melting pot of indigenous converts, Arabs, Berbers, Black and European slaves, Jews and Christians. Although they were in some respects viewed as second-class citizens,

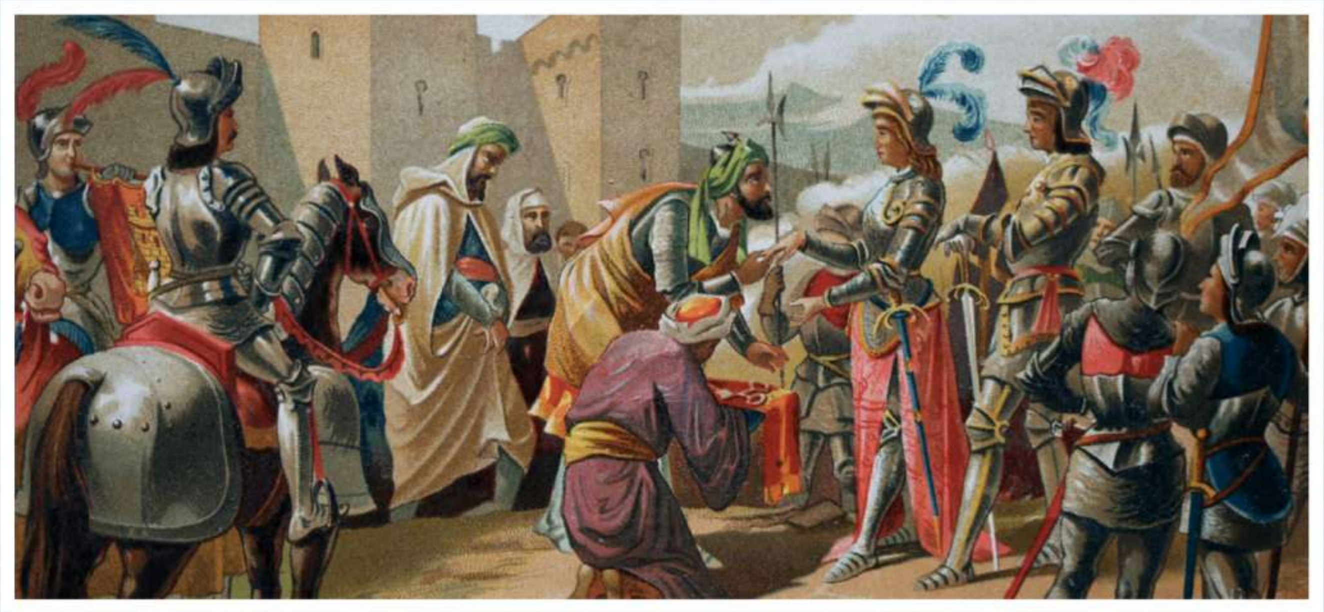
Christians and Jews enjoyed autonomy over their own communities and could expect to rise to high-ranking positions. By the 10th century 80% of the indigenous Spanish population had converted to Islam.

As evidenced in the life of El Cid, after the collapse of the Emirate of Cordoba into a series of taifas, or principalities, Christians and Muslim powers were more than happy to ally with one another against rivals of their own faith. The idea of a Holy War for the peninsula only really intensified with the rise of the zealous Almohad dynasty and Pope Innocent III's declaration of a Crusade before the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. When Alfonso IX of León sided with the Almohads against Castile, the pope called for Christians to fight him with as much gusto as the Muslims, until Alfonso agreed to a truce.

The crusaders who arrived in 13th century Toledo found it a thoroughly Arab city, populated mostly by Arabic-speaking Christians. The local cathedral still was housed in a former mosque and residents had voluntarily embraced Muslim fashion. Despite arriving under the auspices of piety, the foreign crusaders massacred scores of Jews without provocation, forcing the urban militia to come out to stop them. Like the later expulsion, incidents like this undermine the legitimacy of the narrative of Catholicism as an inherently natural or righteous liberating force.

Two of the leading voices in this debate are Emilio González Ferrín and Alejandro García-Sanjuán. Ferrín argues against the very notion of the Muslim 'conquest', asserting that the word represents the rapid rise of Islam as a "sudden disaster", cutting short the organic progress of history by deposing Christianity's peninsular legitimacy. García-Sanjuán, meanwhile, explores the Reconquista myth itself – identifying it as a construct of the pan-European nationalist movement, used by conservatives to exaggerate the role of Catholicism in the Spanish cultural identity. Under Franco, National Catholic propagandists embraced the narrative of the 'catastrophe' of the Islamic 'invasion' and the Christian Spanish nation's subsequent quest for redemption through reunification. Some contemporary conservatives have even gone so far as to inappropriately correlate the conquest of 711 with modern acts of terrorism.

As García-Sanjuán points out, the Andalusian period, spanning more than eight centuries, "encompasses some of Spain's most important historical landmarks", such as Alhambra and the mosque of Córdoba. However, Spanish academics, politicians and journalists continue to clash over its role in the country's heritage and culture to this day.



Above: *The annual commemoration of the Granada's surrender in 1492 remains a controversial event, with progressives concerned that it glorifies an act of conquest and violence*

Under the Franco dictatorship, Christian nationalists presented the Umayyad conquest as both a 'catastrophe' and a God-given opportunity for Christian redemption

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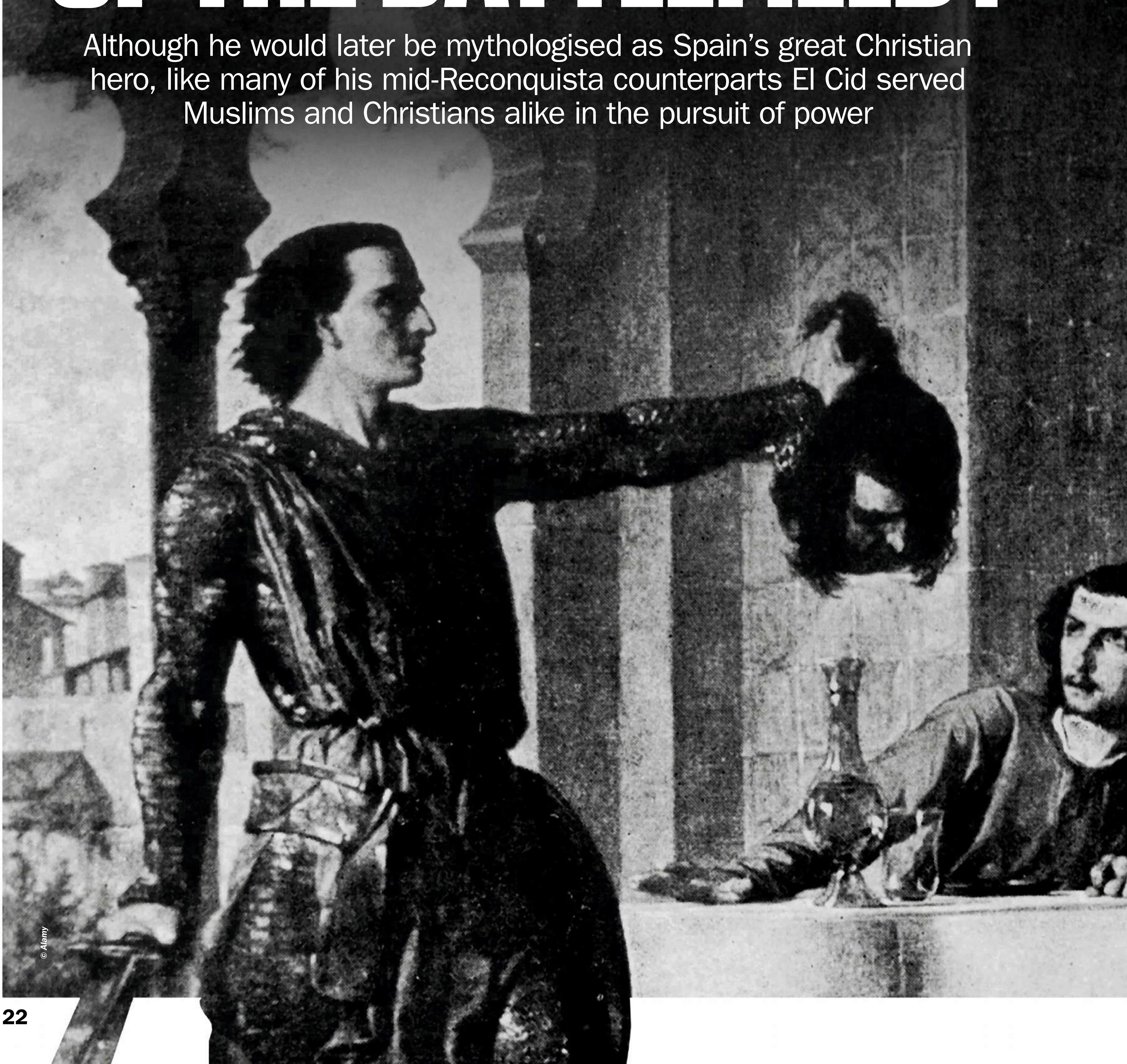
EL CID MASTER OF THE BATTLEFIELD?

Although he would later be mythologised as Spain's great Christian hero, like many of his mid-Reconquista counterparts El Cid served Muslims and Christians alike in the pursuit of power



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Known to the Spanish as El Campeador, 'Master of the Battlefield', and to the Muslims as El Cid, from the Arabic 'Al Sayyid', 'The Master', few figures capture the spirit of the mid-Reconquista tug-of-war than Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar. In the millennium since his death, European works of poetry, literature and drama have transformed him into Spain's great Christian hero, celebrated for wrenching Valencia from Muslim hands. Though the facts of his life remain mired in myth, the historical figure behind the legend offers a far more interesting glimpse into the chaotic nature of the Reconquista period.

Born to a Castilian family of minor nobility in the mid-11th century, Rodrigo ingratiated himself with the king of León's eldest son, Sancho – fighting alongside him at the Battle of Graus against the king of Aragón. When King Fernando died, his domains were split among his children, leaving Castile to Sancho, León to Alfonso, and Galicia to García. When Sancho took Alfonso prisoner and seized León for himself, the 23-year-old Rodrigo shot up the ranks, earning the nickname El Campeador.

When Sancho was assassinated Alfonso took over his kingdoms and married Rodrigo to his third cousin – an incredibly lucrative union. However, after embarking on an unsanctioned military expedition, the warrior fell out of favour and was exiled. He re-emerged in the court of the Muslim Taifa of Zaragoza, which was a fairly common move for masterless Christian noblemen.

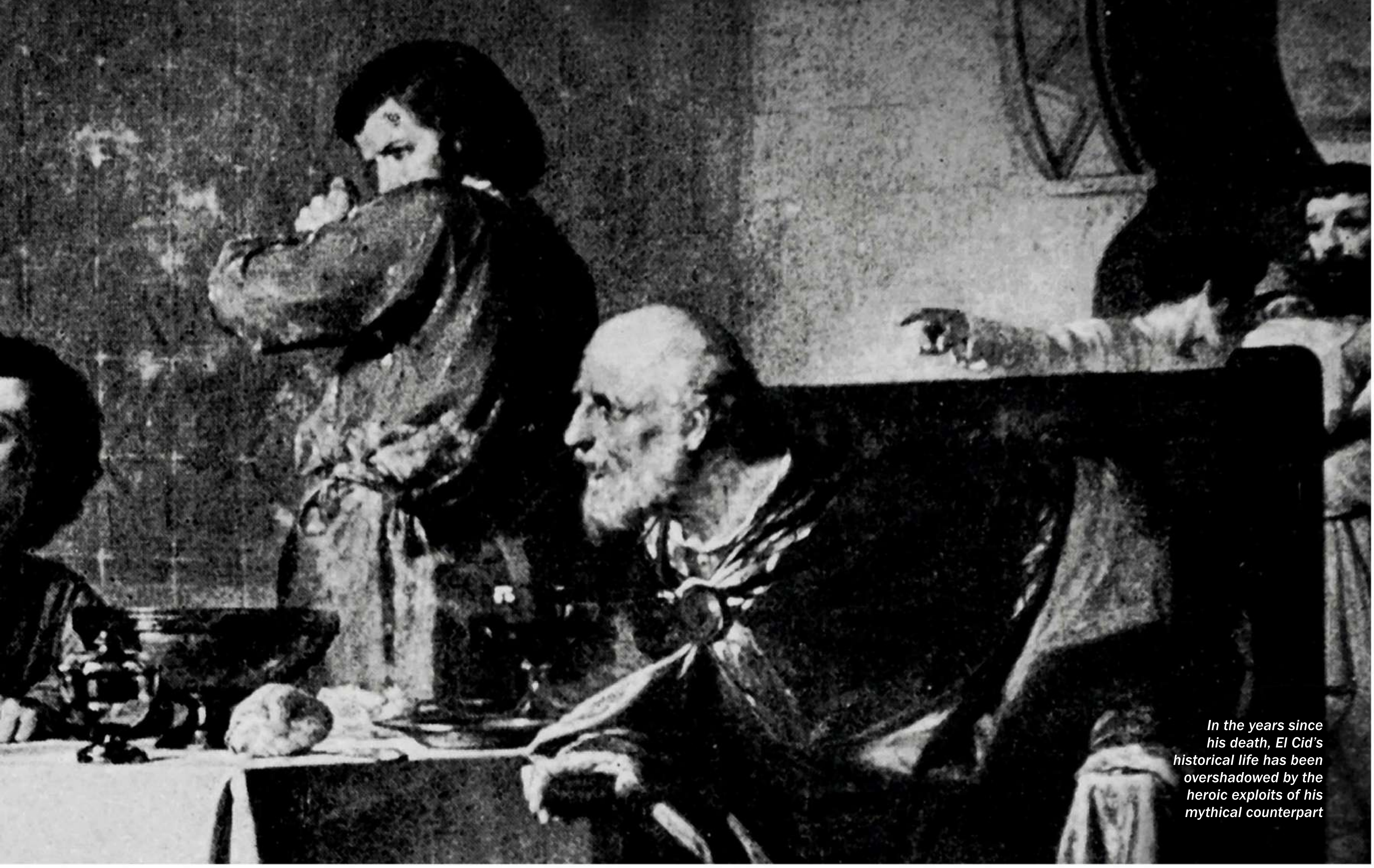
Once again, when the elderly emir of Zaragoza died, his realm was split between his two sons, with Almutamán keeping Zaragoza and his brother Almundir taking Lérida. Rodrigo continued to serve Emir Almutamán, who sent him to subjugate the town of Almenar, which had tried to realign itself with Christian Aragón. Pressing on, Rodrigo continued east towards the Lérida fortress of Escarp, only to be dragged back when the Count of Barcelona laid siege to Almenar. Returning, Rodrigo outmanoeuvred the enemy, capturing the count himself before defeating a joint Aragón-Lérida assault in 1084, taking scores of Aragónese nobles hostage.

When Almutamán died, Rodrigo's former master Alfonso began an aggressive campaign against the Muslim taifas, capturing Toledo then laying siege to Zaragoza. In response, the emergent Maghrebi Almoravid Empire sent an army across the Strait of Gibraltar to help repel the Christians back north. Desperate, Alfonso reconciled with Rodrigo and sent him to defend the kingdom of Valencia from Lérida. Despite the religious faultlines, Rodrigo linked back up with the Emir of Zaragoza. However, in a dramatic twist, when Rodrigo refused to surrender Valencia to his old boss, Zaragoza allied with his old rival, Barcelona, forcing Rodrigo to ally with his erstwhile enemy, Lérida.

After talking the Count of Barcelona into withdrawing, Rodrigo began pushing for greater independence, collecting taxes, which were formerly paid to Catalan counts or the Castile king. With Castile too close for comfort, the small neighbouring Muslim kingdoms of Murcia, Granada and Seville once again asked the Almoravid emperor to attack the Castilian castle of Aledo in 1088. When Rodrigo failed to link up with the Castilian troops near Aledo, considering it an act of treachery, Alfonso once again banished him, this time seizing his property.

Following his dismissal, Rodrigo began carving out his own domain in Valencia, running it as a protectorate and collecting taxes from the region's major strongholds. After defeating another joint Lérida-Barcelona attack, he allied with Zaragoza to defeat a massive invasion by the combined forces of Castile, Aragón, Barcelona, Pisa and Genoa. With this victory, the only force able to rival Rodrigo on the eastern seaboard was the Almoravid Empire. When they returned to Andalusia in June 1090, a pro-Almoravid revolt broke out in the city of Valencia, and Rodrigo realised he needed to assert more direct control. After capturing the Castle of Cebolla, he went on to besiege and finally capture the capital itself, adopting the name Prince Rodrigo El Campeador.

In the ensuing years, he continued to expand and consolidate his principality, defeating a further Almoravid invasion in 1097 at the Battle of Bairén with his new ally, Pedro of Aragón. In May 1099, after a life of adventure, Rodrigo died of natural causes. Just three years later his family would be forced to flee Valencia as the Almoravids overran Andalusia, uniting it under their rule.

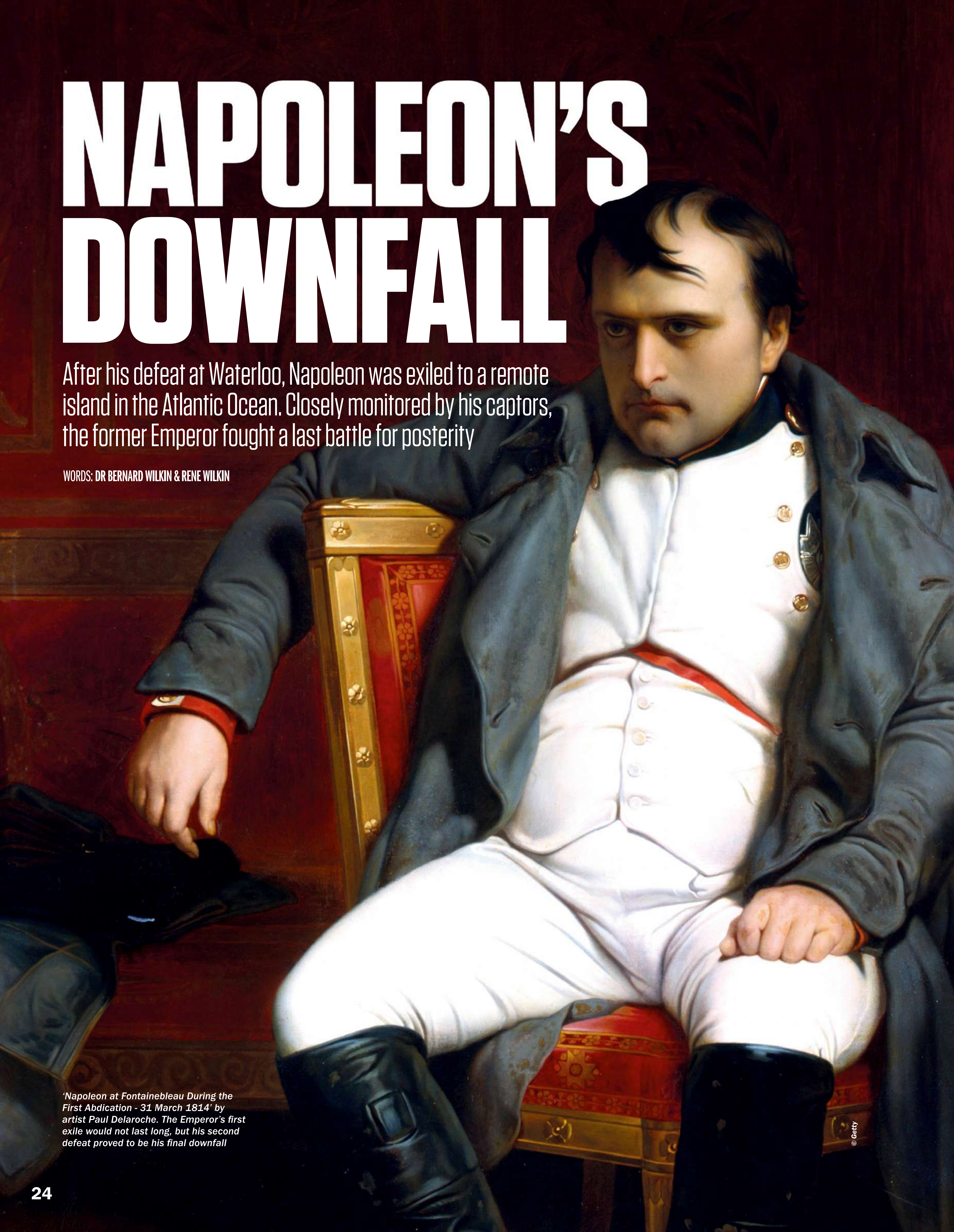


In the years since his death, El Cid's historical life has been overshadowed by the heroic exploits of his mythical counterpart

NAPOLEON'S DOWNFALL

After his defeat at Waterloo, Napoleon was exiled to a remote island in the Atlantic Ocean. Closely monitored by his captors, the former Emperor fought a last battle for posterity

WORDS: **DR BERNARD WILKIN & RENE WILKIN**



'Napoleon at Fontainebleau During the First Abdication - 31 March 1814' by artist Paul Delaroche. The Emperor's first exile would not last long, but his second defeat proved to be his final downfall

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On 21 June 1815, three days after his defeat at Waterloo, Napoleon left his army for Paris. As a letter written from Philippeville to his brother Joseph demonstrates, the Emperor believed that his position was not entirely compromised:

"All is not lost. I suppose that if I gather my armies I will have 150,000 men. Federates and National Guards can also provide 100,000 men. Depot Battalions, 50,000. I should therefore have 300,000 men to oppose the enemy. I will carry the artillery with luxurious horses and raise 100,000 conscripts. I will give them royalist weapons and the muskets of the weak National Guards. I will launch mass conscription in the Dauphiné, the Lyon region, Burgundy, Lorraine, Champagne. I will harass the enemy but I need to be helped and not distracted. I will travel to Laon. I will probably find other men. I have not heard from Grouchy. If he is not captured as I fear, I could have another 50,000 men in three days. With them, I will keep the enemy busy and will gain time to let Paris, as well as France, do its duty. Austrians are slow. Prussians fear peasants and dare not go forward. Everything can still be fixed."

Although desperate, this letter should be read in the light of the many incredible events that had happened in just four months. The Emperor, vanquished and abandoned on the island of Elba, had landed with a handful of soldiers at Golf-Juan on 1 March 1815. Soldiers sent by King Louis XVIII to intercept him had defected and rallied to the Corsican. On 20 March 1815, he had reached Paris, where he had been welcomed as a hero. Napoleon had hoped that the European governments would see his return as a fait accompli. He was wrong. Negotiation was not an option and he had immediately been branded an outlaw. Having exhausted all diplomatic options, Napoleon had once again gone to war. However, the French army was not in the same state as it was in 1814. Soldiers were largely in favour of the Emperor but the Marshals, the same who had refused to fight and had forced his abdication, had defected and followed Louis XVIII in exile. Civilians were not unanimously happy with this comeback either. If Parisian workers had largely been in favour of his return, others were actively waiting for peace. Royalist revolts had erupted in Vendee. To guarantee middle-class support, Napoleon had agreed on an elected parliamentary assembly. But all of this had not prevented the defeat at the Battle of Waterloo.

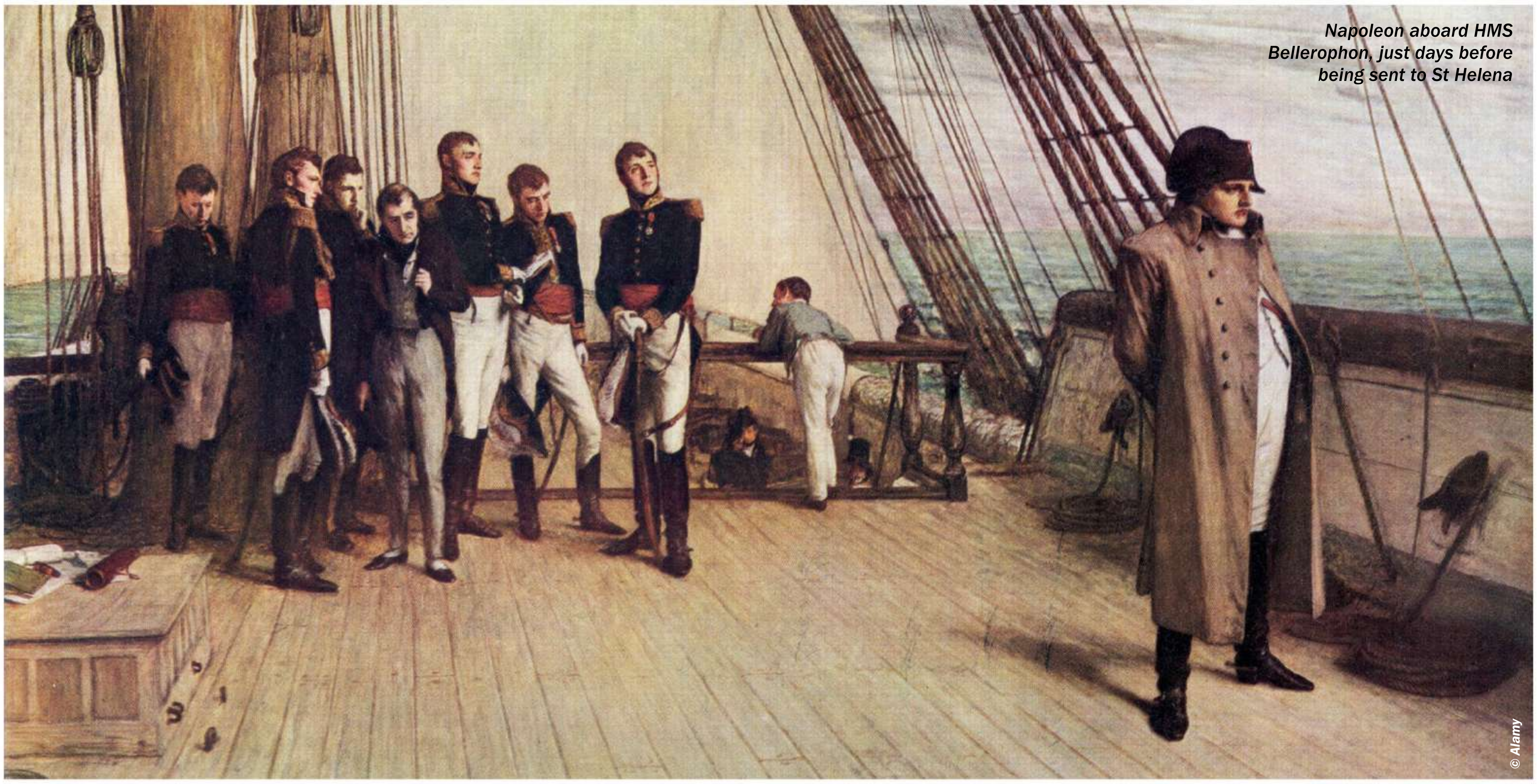
"I OFFER MYSELF AS A SACRIFICE TO THE HATRED OF FRANCE'S ENEMIES. MAY THEY BE SINCERE IN THEIR DECLARATIONS AND HAVE HOSTILITY AGAINST MY PERSON ONLY!"

After the military defeat at the end of June 1815, Napoleon quickly lost his illusions. An opposing front led by the fierce Police Minister Joseph Fouché, who was convinced that Louis XVIII's return was inevitable, unified various political tendencies. First, he tried to convince Napoleon to abdicate in favour of his son Napoleon II. The minister also managed to pass a motion stating that any attempt to dissolve the parliament was an offence constituting high treason. Napoleon, shaken, agreed to abdicate and proclaimed:

"French citizens! I started the war to support national independence. I had hoped for the reunion of all efforts, of determination, and the cooperation of all national authorities. I was right to hope for success and had defied enemy declarations against me. Circumstances have changed. I offer myself as a sacrifice to the hatred of France's enemies. May they be sincere in their declarations and have hostility against my person only! My political life is over and I proclaim my son under the name Napoleon II Emperor of the French. [...] Unite for common good and to remain an independent nation." But his attempt to promote his son failed – the little boy was in Vienna with his mother under the authority of the Austrian Emperor.

Napoleon tried to find a place to take refuge. He thought about the United States of America, especially since Joseph Fouché had him believe that the British had agreed to let him embark. But once he reached Rochefort on 3 July 1815, he discovered that he had been fooled. After contemplating a secret attempt to force the British naval blockade, the ex-Emperor asked the British for asylum and embarked on 15 July on board the HMS Bellerophon, commanded by Captain Maitland. "I place myself under the protection of your prince and your laws," declared Napoleon to the British officer. Once again, the French leader was misguided. The British prime minister, even before hearing about the surrender, had decided to ship him far away from Europe, either to Cape Town or St Helena.

On 31 July 1815, while on board the Bellerophon, Napoleon learned from two British officers that he was to be sent to St Helena. He exploded. On 4 August 1815, he wrote a protest against this decision: "I solemnly protest against the violence imposed upon me, against my person and my freedom. I came on board the Bellerophon as a free man. I am not a prisoner, I am England's host. I call on history. It will state that an enemy, who waged war against the English people for 20 years, came freely and miserably seeking asylum and laws. What better proof could he give of his esteem and trust? But how did England respond to such magnanimity? They faked


Napoleon aboard HMS Bellerophon, just days before being sent to St Helena

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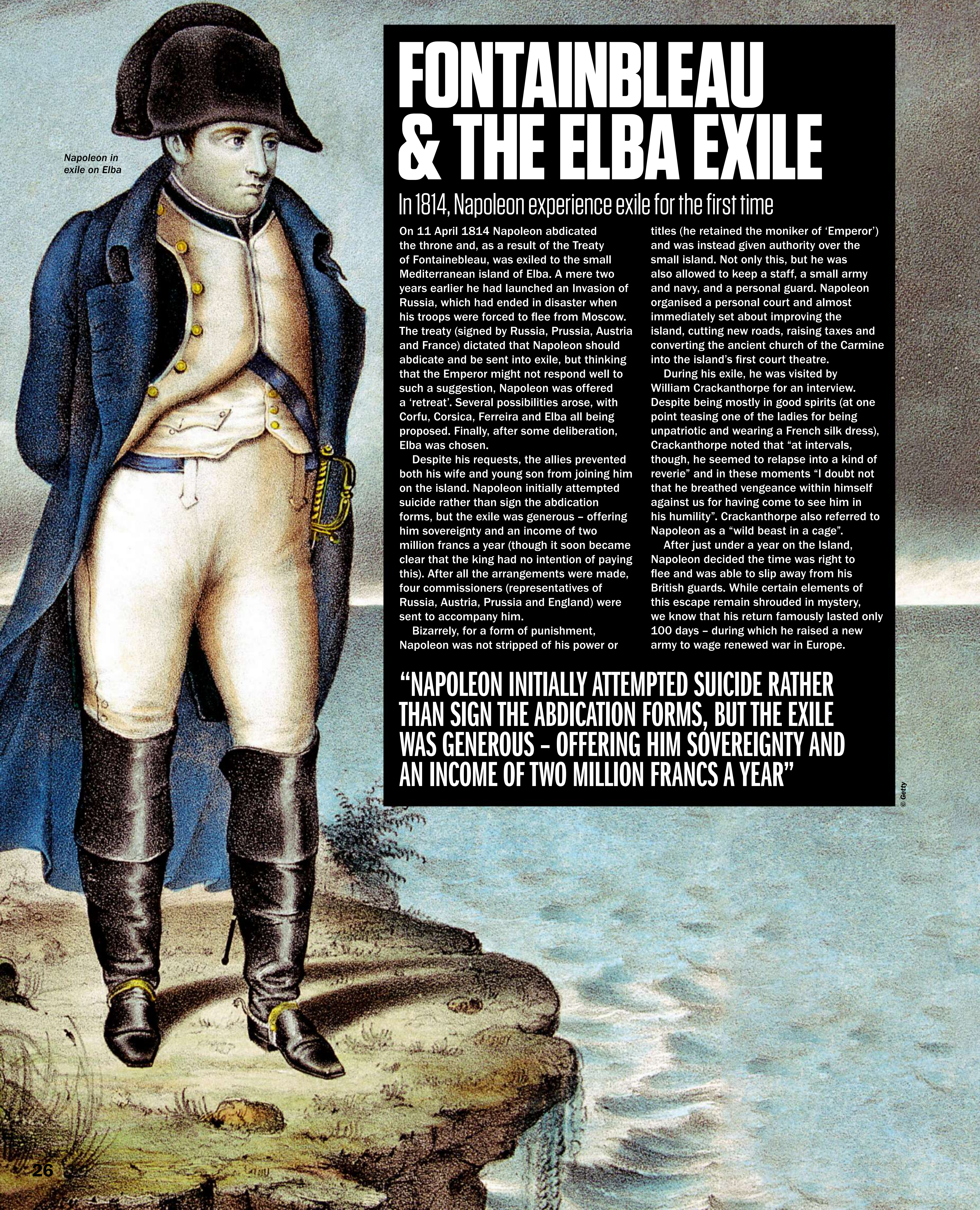


Napoleon in exile on Elba

FONTAINBLEAU & THE ELBA EXILE

In 1814, Napoleon experience exile for the first time

On 11 April 1814 Napoleon abdicated the throne and, as a result of the Treaty of Fontainebleau, was exiled to the small Mediterranean island of Elba. A mere two years earlier he had launched an Invasion of Russia, which had ended in disaster when his troops were forced to flee from Moscow. The treaty (signed by Russia, Prussia, Austria and France) dictated that Napoleon should abdicate and be sent into exile, but thinking that the Emperor might not respond well to such a suggestion, Napoleon was offered a 'retreat'. Several possibilities arose, with Corfu, Corsica, Ferreira and Elba all being proposed. Finally, after some deliberation, Elba was chosen.

Despite his requests, the allies prevented both his wife and young son from joining him on the island. Napoleon initially attempted suicide rather than sign the abdication forms, but the exile was generous – offering him sovereignty and an income of two million francs a year (though it soon became clear that the king had no intention of paying this). After all the arrangements were made, four commissioners (representatives of Russia, Austria, Prussia and England) were sent to accompany him.

Bizarrely, for a form of punishment, Napoleon was not stripped of his power or titles (he retained the moniker of 'Emperor') and was instead given authority over the small island. Not only this, but he was also allowed to keep a staff, a small army and navy, and a personal guard. Napoleon organised a personal court and almost immediately set about improving the island, cutting new roads, raising taxes and converting the ancient church of the Carmine into the island's first court theatre.

During his exile, he was visited by William Crackanthorpe for an interview. Despite being mostly in good spirits (at one point teasing one of the ladies for being unpatriotic and wearing a French silk dress), Crackanthorpe noted that "at intervals, though, he seemed to relapse into a kind of reverie" and in these moments "I doubt not that he breathed vengeance within himself against us for having come to see him in his humility". Crackanthorpe also referred to Napoleon as a "wild beast in a cage".

After just under a year on the Island, Napoleon decided the time was right to flee and was able to slip away from his British guards. While certain elements of this escape remain shrouded in mystery, we know that his return famously lasted only 100 days – during which he raised a new army to wage renewed war in Europe.

> "NAPOLEON INITIALLY ATTEMPTED SUICIDE RATHER THAN SIGN THE ABDICATION FORMS, BUT THE EXILE WAS GENEROUS – OFFERING HIM SOVEREIGNTY AND AN INCOME OF TWO MILLION FRANCS A YEAR"

© Getty

a helping hand but when he was delivered in good faith, he was burned to the stake."

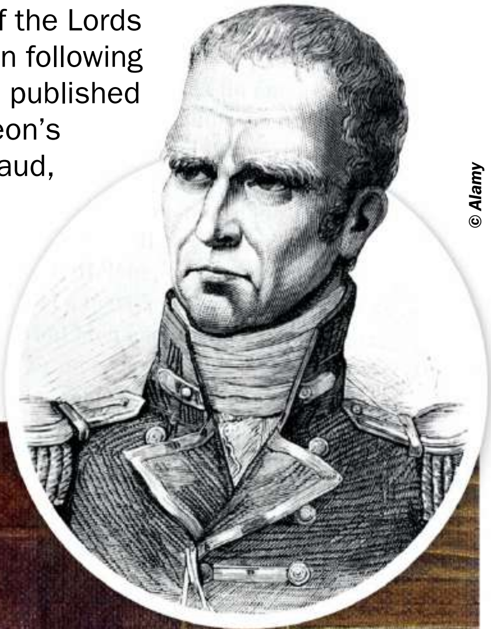
The decision to exile Napoleon to St Helena was not taken lightly. This island was not a Crown possession but belonged to the East India Company. British rights were therefore not applicable and it was possible to keep a prisoner without being judged by a tribunal. However, Napoleon was allowed to bring others with him. His companions, all volunteers, were composed of three officers, a doctor, a secretary, and a dozen servants. The oldest was General Bertrand. Fanny, his wife, followed. Two other generals were accounted for: Gourgaud and Montholon. Gourgaud was entirely devoted to the Emperor, while Montholon had not often been with Napoleon before the exile. He also took his wife Albine with him. Among other notable figures were Mameluke Ali, whose real name was Louis Étienne Saint-Denis, and Bellerophon's Irish doctor O'Meara, who had decided to follow the Emperor in exile to replace Louis Pierre Maingualt, who had no desire to follow on a remote island.

Napoleon and his modest court were transferred on the HMS Northumberland on 7 August. The ship left on 9 August, and on 15 October 1815, they reached St Helena. All were impressed by what was described as a sinister place. The location was ideal for the task. A strategic point in the South Atlantic, thousands of kilometres from any continent, hard to access, naturally defended by rocks and garnished by hundreds of cannons: it was a fortress. Moreover, the British Government had transferred 2,000 soldiers to guard the famous prisoner and a naval squadron was always stationed in the area.

Napoleon's home was not yet ready and he was assisted to the Briars, a property belonging to William Balcombe, an agent of the East India Company. On 10 December 1815, Napoleon and his followers were transferred to Longwood, his last home. The place was not very big. Fifty people lived permanently with the Emperor in this location battered by strong winds, humid and infested by rats. Napoleon wanted to live with a small court as an Emperor. However, in April 1816 the new governor, Sir Hudson Lowe, met Napoleon. The men took an instant dislike to each other. Lowe had been instructed by his government to treat Napoleon harshly. For the governor, there was no Emperor, simply a general, one that he had to prevent from escaping at all cost. Lowe tried to make life for his charges as complex as possible.

The little French colony of St Helena rapidly found life monotonous. Napoleon's followers, understanding that they were living in unusual times, wrote down every single fact and word pronounced by the famous man. French historian Jean Tulard noted that no less than 38 British and French testimonies were written by various witnesses. Napoleon, as he had intended as soon as he had learned that he was to be exiled, worked on his memoirs and other texts. Despite being monitored by his captors, he managed to bribe passing sailors in order to send mail. He spent more than a million francs doing this, hoping to influence public opinion in Britain, where his popularity never ceased to rise. In England, he published two pamphlets and three books anonymously. In them, he justified his leadership and criticised his captivity.

These writings were a source of acute embarrassment for the British government. In March 1817, the House of the Lords debated Napoleon's situation following a "call to the British nation", published anonymously. One of Napoleon's companions, General Gourgaud, who had been asked to leave St Helena by the Emperor himself, told a



Inset, right: Hudson Lowe, the governor of St Helena

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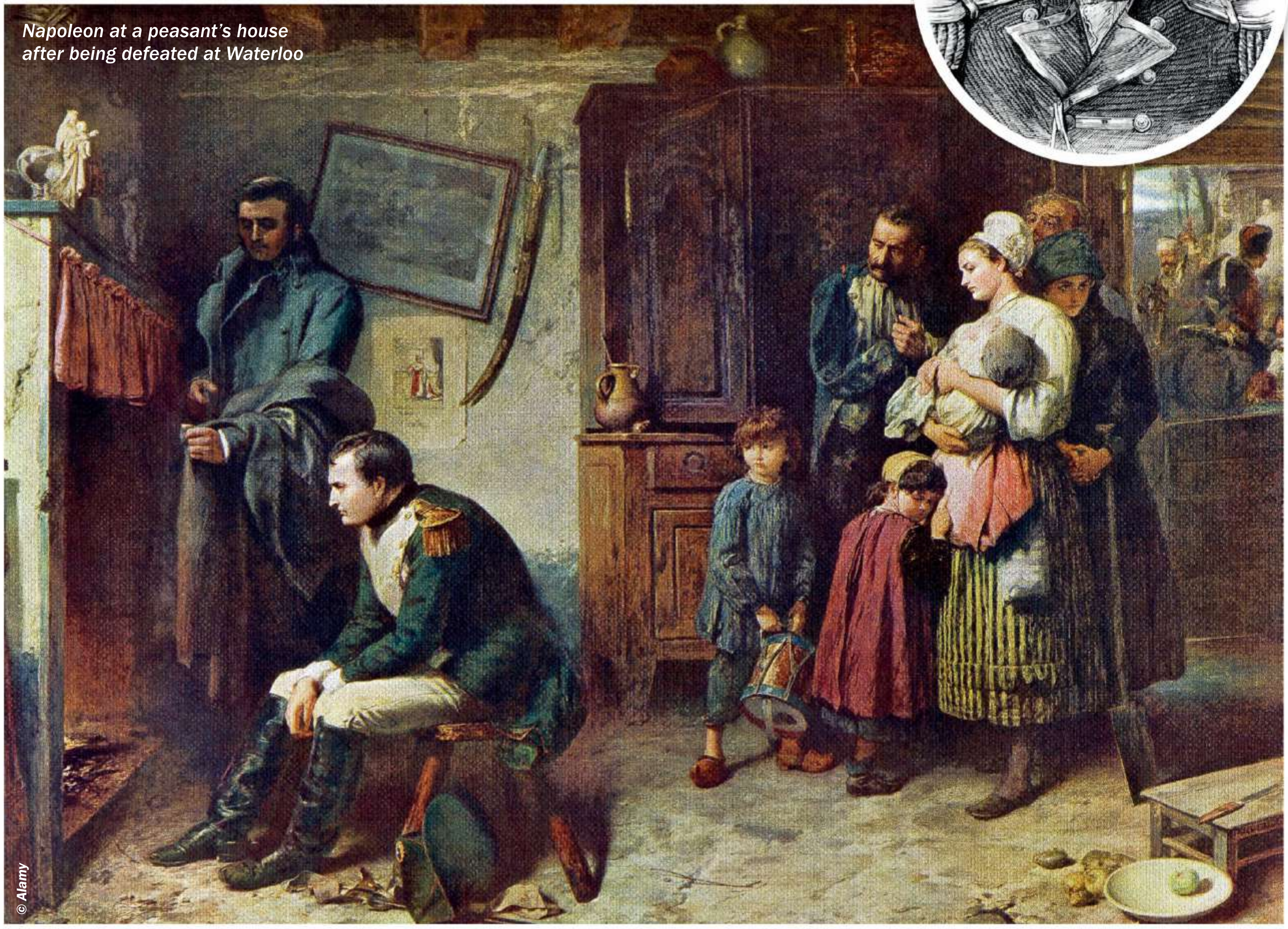


Napoleon at a peasant's house after being defeated at Waterloo

© Alamy

TIMELINE

2 JULY 1815

Having lost at the Battle of Waterloo, Napoleon fled, eventually reaching the port of Rochefort.

15 JULY 1815

Napoleon embarks the HMS Bellerophon, hoping to settle quietly in Britain. On 31 July 1815, he learns that his final destination is St Helena.

7-9 AUGUST 1815

The ex-Emperor is transferred to the HMS Northumberland, which sets sail for St Helena. His destination is reached on 15 October 1815.

10 DECEMBER 1815

Napoleon is housed at Longwood, a damp windswept mansion located in an inhospitable part of the island.

15 APRIL 1816

Napoleon meets for the first time the new governor, Hudson Lowe. The governor, known for his lack of tact, enforces strict regulations.

1 OCTOBER 1817

The captive's health starts to deteriorate. In the following months, doctors diagnose liver problems.

6 JANUARY 1819

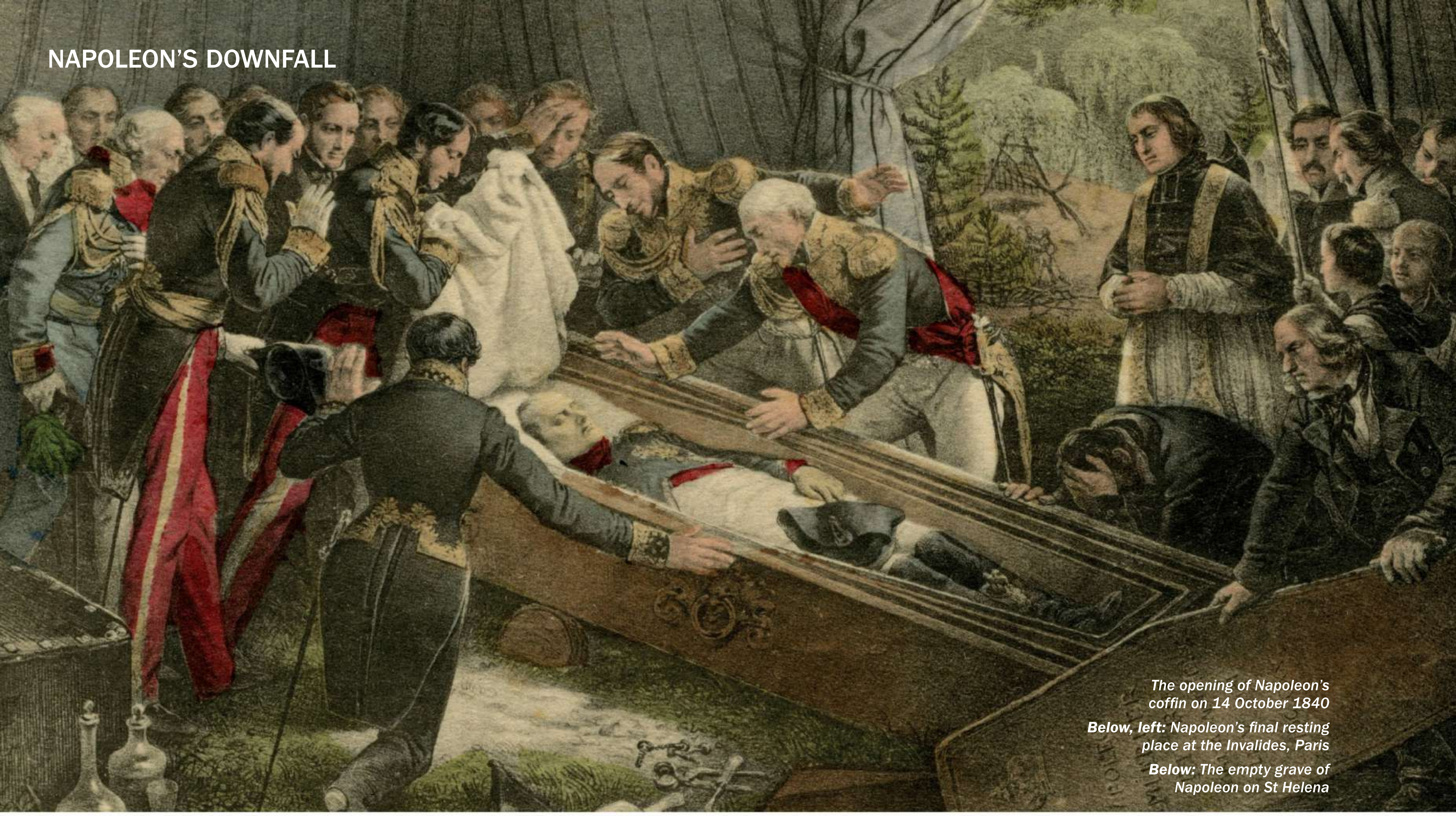
The ex-Emperor faints in front of Montholon. His health is a source of concern for his entourage.

12 APRIL 1821

Napoleon begins his testament on 12 April 1821 and dies on 5 May 1821. He is buried on 9 May 1821.

15 OCTOBER 1840

His body is exhumed and shipped to France. He is buried for the final time on 15 December 1840.



The opening of Napoleon's coffin on 14 October 1840

Below, left: Napoleon's final resting place at the Invalides, Paris

Below: The empty grave of Napoleon on St Helena

Images © Alamy

British minister that the captive was better than ever and that his complaints were an act. Following this indiscretion, the British government refused to improve the situation. The fate of Napoleon was again debated at the Congress of Aachen at the end of 1818. The European monarchs once again turned down any attempt to better the Corsican's fate based on Gourgaud's testimony.

Napoleon also published anonymous books in France. Once again, he was quickly recognised as the author, especially after trying to explain his last campaign's failure.

Napoleon's companions continued to write down every word. Four of them were particularly important to understanding life at St Helena: Emmanuel de las Cases, his secretary; and Generals Gourgaud, Montholon and Bertrand. The first was particularly important. In November 1816 Las Cases was arrested and expelled from St Helena after having tried to sneak two letters from the island without asking the governor. He had written systematically what the Emperor had told him beforehand. When put on a ship, his manuscript was confiscated by the British and only given back in 1823 after Napoleon's death. In 1824, Las Cases published his *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, one of the most influential books of the 19th century in France and Europe. In it, the writer presented Napoleon as a liberal who had managed to unify Germany and Italy. It can be said that this publication made the Emperor, who was hated in 1815, a popular figure again. As a consequence, the Imperial regime was rehabilitated and Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, the nephew of Napoleon, was elected President of the French Republic, which soon became the Second Empire. In 2019, the original manuscript was located at the British Library and published by the Fondation Napoléon. The comparison with the published versions demonstrates that Las Cases probably made up several anecdotes.

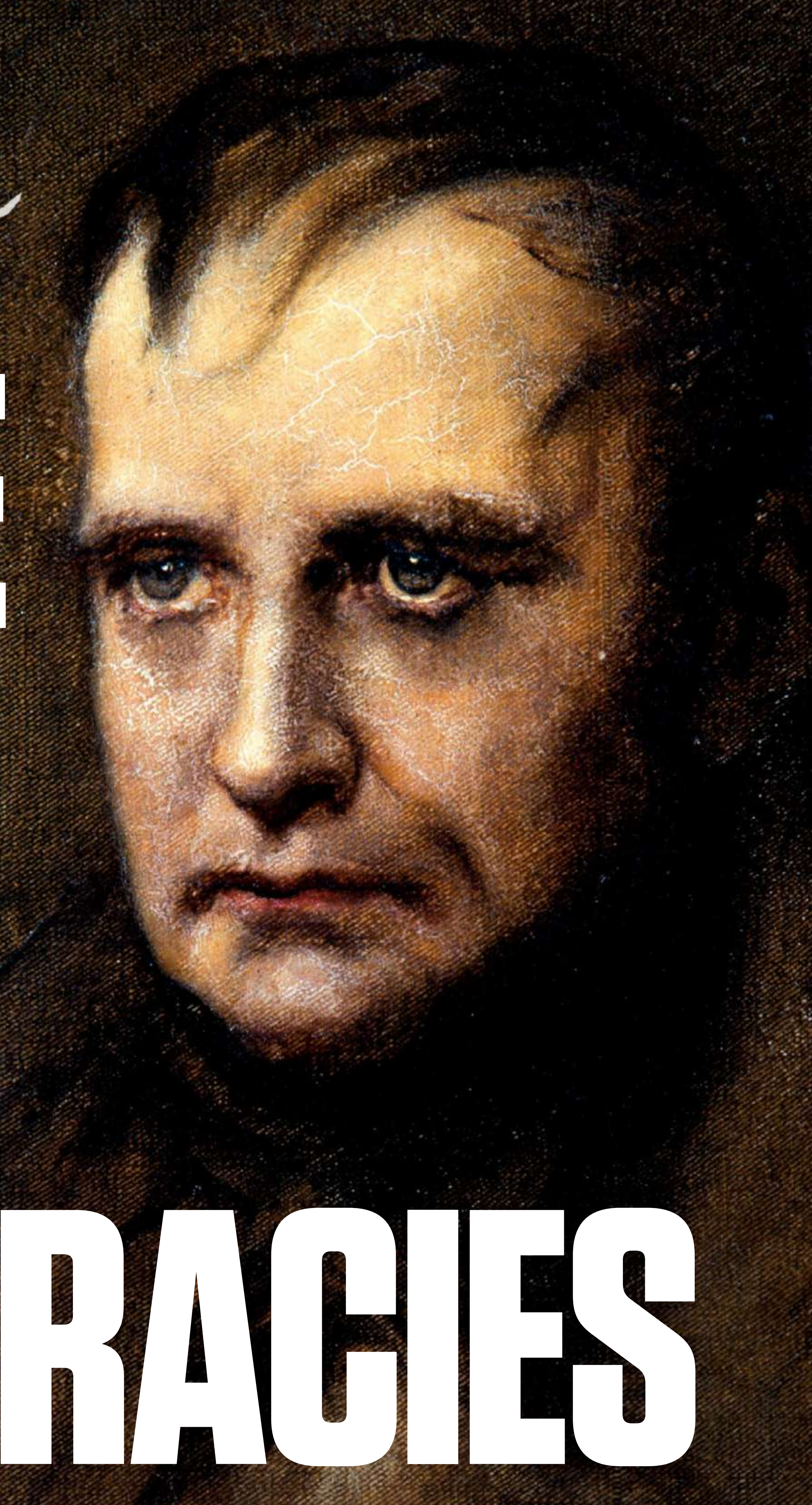
Life at St Helena was not easy. Tensions and personal problems were common among the French. The most unbearable figure was probably General Gourgaud, who was jealous of those that the Emperor liked. He was particularly angry at Montholon, whose wife had become Napoleon's mistress with her husband's blessing. Things became such that the Corsican was forced to order Gourgaud to leave in February 1818. This departure was the cause of several problems for Napoleon. Montholon sailed away from the island in July 1819, leaving her lover in a state of depression.

During the campaign of 1815, Napoleon's health was already poor. In April 1816, he frequently felt faint. From 1819, Napoleon was seen less and less, suffering from various afflictions. Ulcers and small haemorrhages weakened the captive. At the end of 1820, he was unable to move without help from others. However, Lowe was convinced that his prisoner was faking his ailments. Realising the seriousness of his condition, Napoleon wrote his testament in April 1821. Finally, he died on 5 May 1821.

The news of his death took weeks to spread. At the time, Napoleon was still a disliked figure. His former minister, the clever Charles Maurice de Talleyrand, upon learning about Napoleon's death, told his guests that "this is not an event, merely a piece of news".

Napoleon

ESCAPE PLANS AND CONSPIRACIES



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From submarine escapes to arsenic poisoning, the final years of the Emperor's life are shrouded in plots and controversy. Historian Sir Brian Unwin unravels the real story of Napoleon's last days, as well as the truth behind the wildest conspiracy theories surrounding his second exile

WORDS: **CALLUM MCKELVIE**

SIR BRIAN UNWIN, KCB, CHAIRMAN, BRITISH NAPOLEONIC BICENTENARY TRUST

Sir Brian Unwin is the author of *Terrible Exile: The Last Days Of Napoleon On St Helena* and a former civil servant. He is also on the board of The British Napoleonic Bicentenary Trust. "The Trust was set up nearly 18 months ago to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the death of Napoleon," Unwin says,"and also to restore some of the historic Georgian buildings on St Helena. There is an extensive array of fortifications and residences, all connected with Napoleon, that are in a terrible state of repair. We're doing a series of virtual events, all of which can be accessed through our website **napoleon200.org**."

On 5 May 1821, Napoleon passed away in exile on the Island of St Helena. By many accounts the six years since his arrival had been unhappy for the Emperor, who had reportedly gained weight and become increasingly unwell. His death at the age of 51 is now suspected to have been caused by stomach cancer – a painful and pitiful passing for France's greatest contemporary hero. Of course, for a man whose entire life had been spent building a legend, his death, perhaps due to its relatively sad and quiet circumstances, could never be accepted. Almost immediately a wealth of 'conspiracy' theories and rumours surrounding Napoleon's time on the island began to circulate, many of which still cause speculation to this day. From tales of submarine escape attempts to accusations of poisoning from Napoleon's own doctor, the two intervening centuries have produced a raft of rumoured plots and supposed schemes.

Upon his arrival at St Helena in 1815, Napoleon was given residence at Longwood House, a converted farmhouse originally designed for the governor of the island. Yet this was not a repeat of his comparatively lavish stay on Elba during his first exile, during which time the Emperor had been allowed to retain his title. On Elba he had even been granted a small military and naval force and been given sovereignty over the entire island.

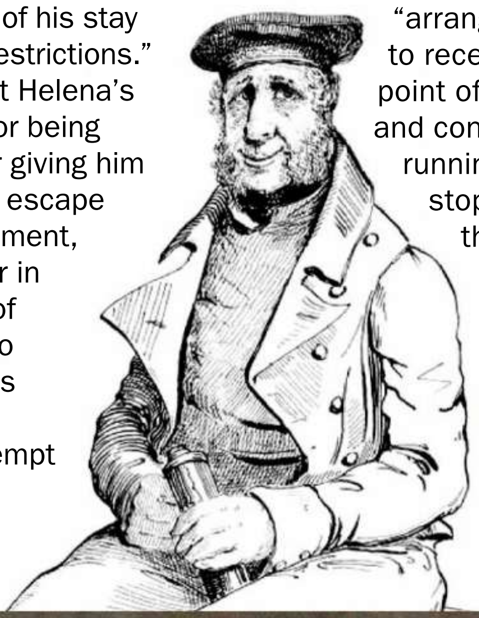
Sir Brian Unwin, author of *Terrible Exile: The Last Days Of Napoleon On St Helena*, describes the conditions Napoleon faced on the island: "He was a prisoner. There were almost 2,000 troops to guard him. The population of the island was only [a few thousand]. So just imagine 2,000 troops simply as a guard, not to mention an admiral with a small flotilla sailing 24 hours round the island to prevent any possible attempt to rescue him." Compared to his ten months on Elba, these new arrangements gave Napoleon barely any freedoms. "He was absolutely furious with these restrictions," Unwin continues. "He regarded them as utterly outrageous and in breach of every conceivable international and humane law. That was one of the sort of running battles for the rest of his stay there as he protested these restrictions."

None could have blamed St Helena's governor, Sir Hudson Lowe, for being concerned about his prisoner giving him the slip. Napoleon's previous escape had caused much embarrassment, not to mention a renewed war in Europe that cost thousands of lives. Lowe was determined to have no such repeat under his watch, and plans were put in place should any escape attempt occur. One plot even involved the famed naval commander and the inspiration behind the Hornblower novels, Thomas Cochrane, as Unwin explains: "There were many rumours of plots in the United States among Bonapartists. There was a plan that involved Cochrane putting together a fleet to sail over and attempt to rescue Napoleon from St Helena, but that never came to anything."

A subaquatic escape?

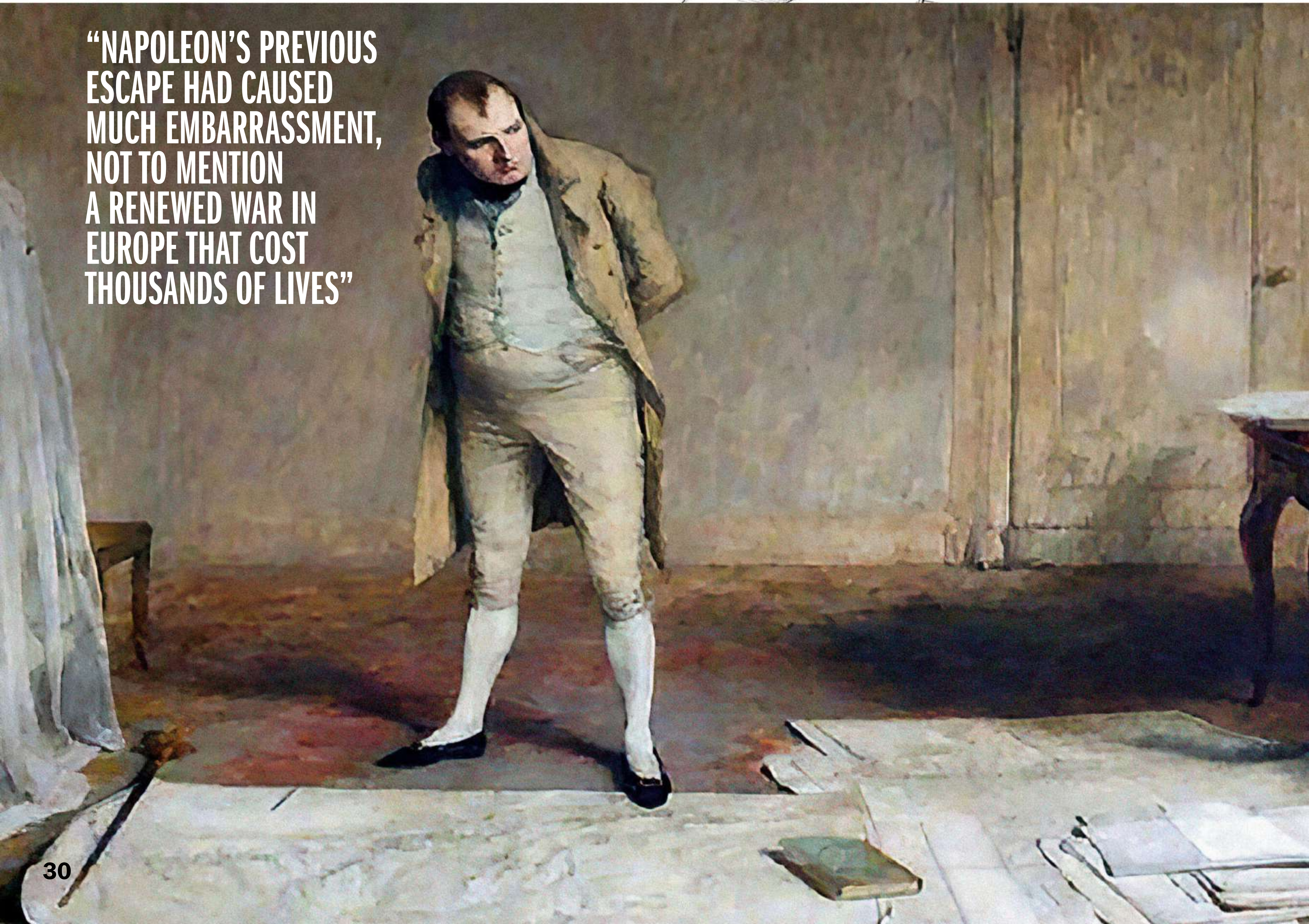
General Charles Tristan, marquis de Montholon, one of Napoleon's companions during his exile, mentions a variety of other plots in his memoirs. Of these, one in particular stands out, and involves an unnamed naval captain whose "vessel was returning from the Indies" and who had "arranged everything so as to be able to receive the Emperor in a boat at a point of the coast previously designated and convey him to his vessel without running the slightest risk of being stopped". Whatever the reason, this daring operation was never carried out.

"There's a bizarre story about a plan to build a submarine," says Unwin. The plan was "to bring the ship over, launch the



A sketch of Thomas Johnson, who was said to have been employed in an attempt to spring Napoleon from St Helena using a submarine

Source: Wiki / PD / Gov

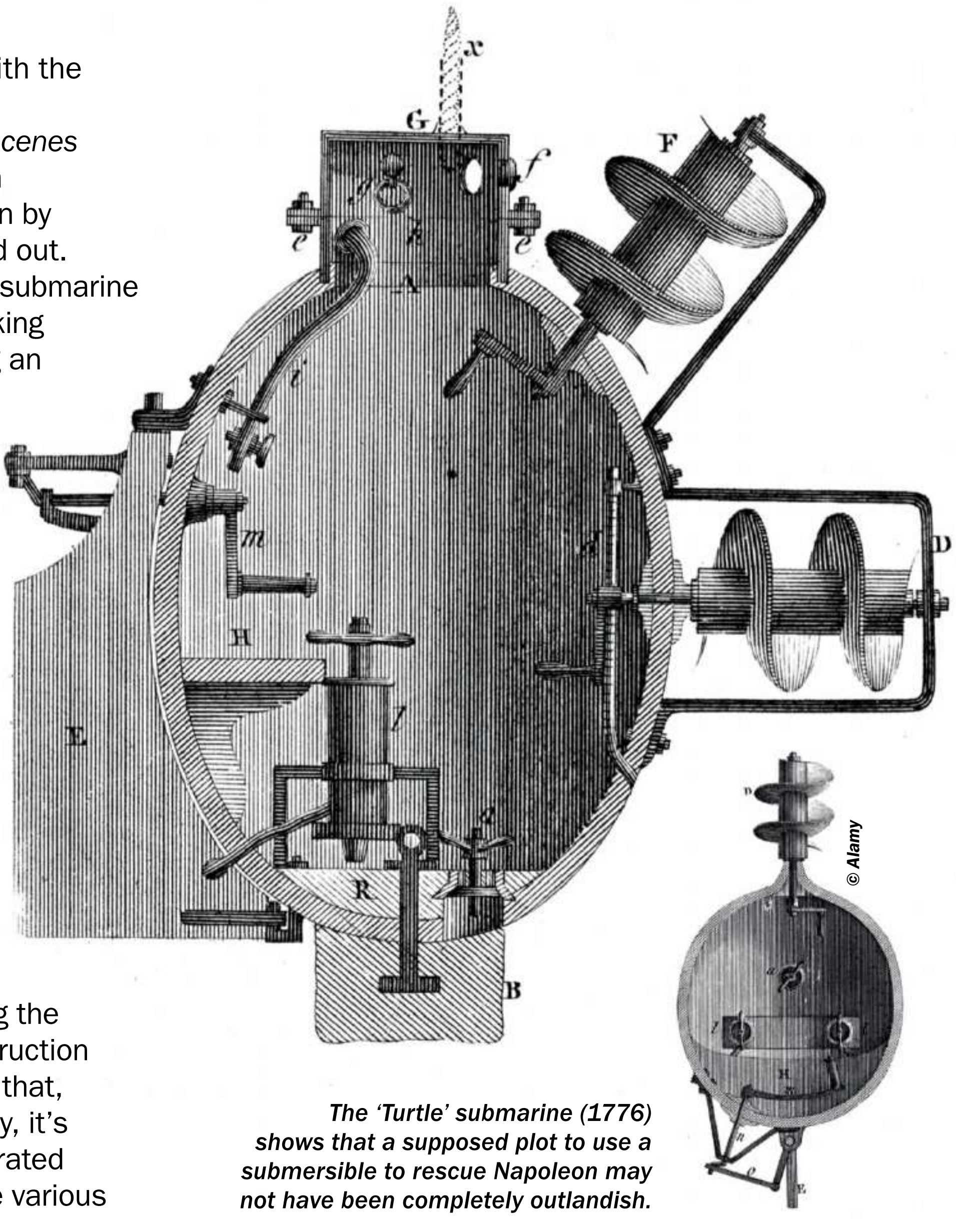


"NAPOLEON'S PREVIOUS ESCAPE HAD CAUSED MUCH EMBARRASSMENT, NOT TO MENTION A RENEWED WAR IN EUROPE THAT COST THOUSANDS OF LIVES" little submarine, snatch Napoleon off the beach, take him back in the submarine, put him on the ship and take him away". Though at first seemingly ludicrous, this plot may have in fact worked. Sometime around 1620 Cornelis Drebbel had managed to dive 15 feet beneath the River Thames in his 'diving boat', and during the American Revolution David Bushnell invented the 'Turtle', a one-man submarine that used a hand-crank and foot-pump for propulsion. In 1776, the Continental Army's Ezra Lee attempted to use the Turtle to fix a bomb on the hull of the British warship HMS Eagle. Lee was unsuccessful and it would not be until decades after Napoleon's death that more practical submarines would be built. However, the proof of concept was certainly there at the time, suggesting that however unlikely, Napoleon's extraction via submarine was not entirely impossible.

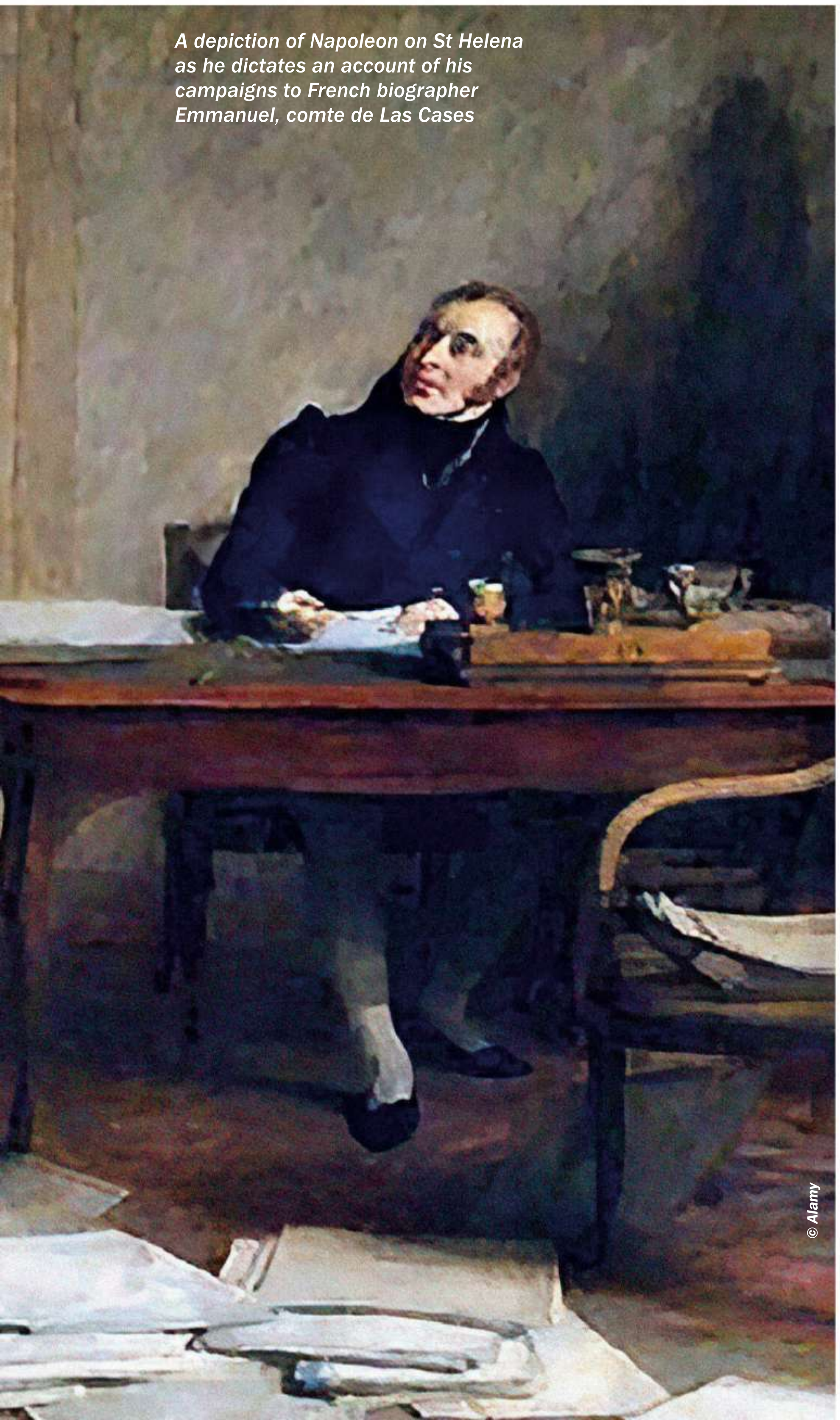
At the heart of this supposed subaquatic scheme is inventor, adventurer and notorious smuggler Thomas Johnson (sometimes called Johnstone), a fascinating historical figure whose larger-than-life antics remain mostly forgotten. Despite his criminal enterprises (he was imprisoned on multiple occasions) his nautical prowess saw him commanding a pair of secret missions for the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic Wars. By 1815 Johnson had become known for his skill and ingenuity, and he was said to have been hired to build and pilot a small submersible craft with the intention of rescuing Napoleon.

In an obscure 1835 novel entitled *Scenes And Stories, By A Clergyman In Debt* (in a section believed to have been written by Johnson himself) the entire plan is laid out. The plot involved Johnson landing the submarine on St Helena and, after somehow making his way to Longwood House, obtaining an introduction to Napoleon and providing him with the disguise of a coachman's groom. The two would then flee to the cliffs where, using a "mechanical chair" (most likely a form of Bosun's Chair) the Emperor would then be lowered to the beach and the two would board a smaller submarine (named the Etna) which would then take them to an even larger submersible (The Eagle).

When questioned over how they would have avoided any pursuing enemy ships, Johnson responded: "Under water we should await the approach of an enemy and then, with the aid of the little Etna, attaching the torpedo to her bottom, effect her destruction in 15 minutes." After a statement like that, whatever the validity of Johnson's story, it's pretty clear that he must have exaggerated his tale somewhat. However, there are various

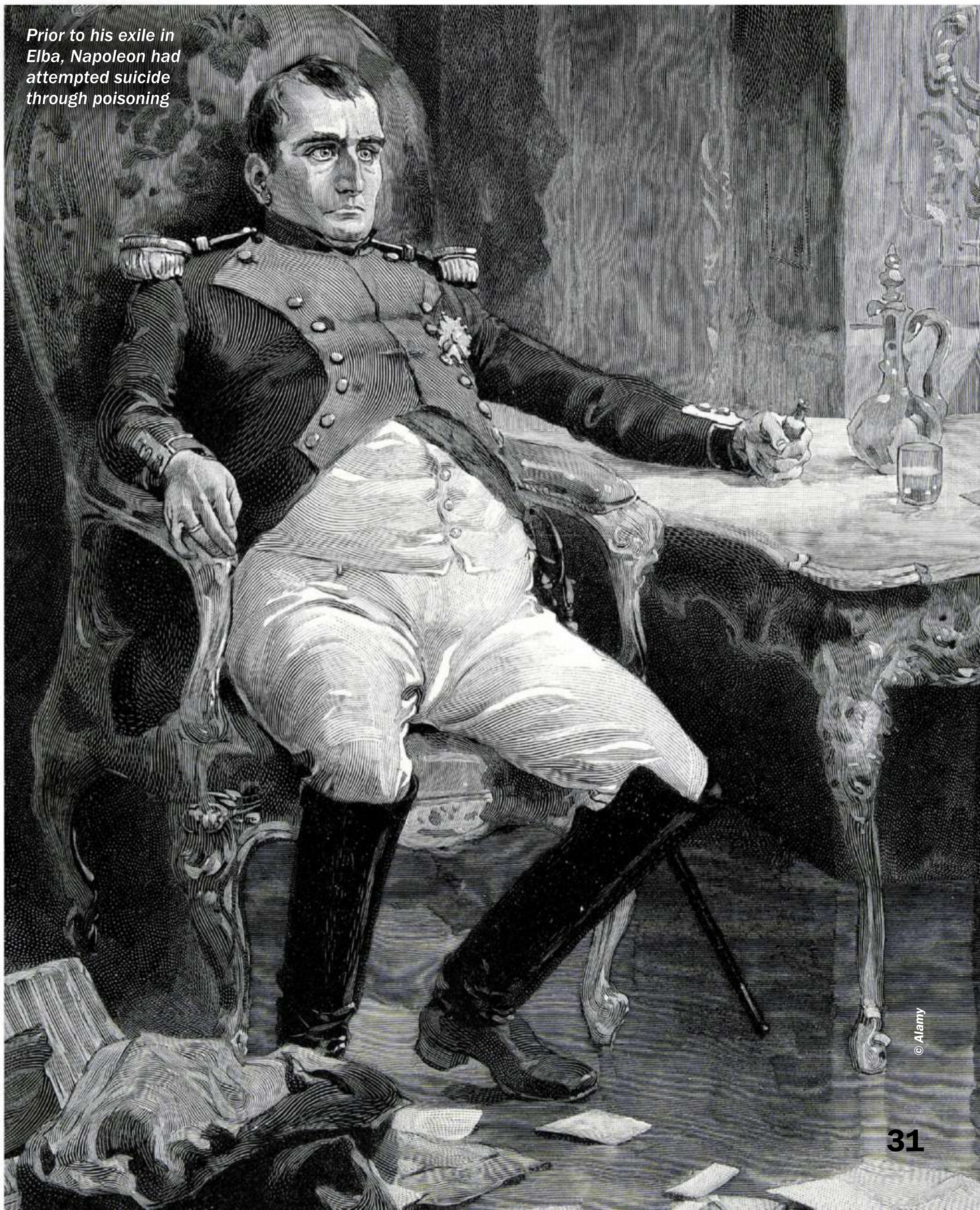


The 'Turtle' submarine (1776) shows that a supposed plot to use a submersible to rescue Napoleon may not have been completely outlandish.



A depiction of Napoleon on St Helena as he dictates an account of his campaigns to French biographer Emmanuel, comte de Las Cases

© Alamy



Prior to his exile in Elba, Napoleon had attempted suicide through poisoning

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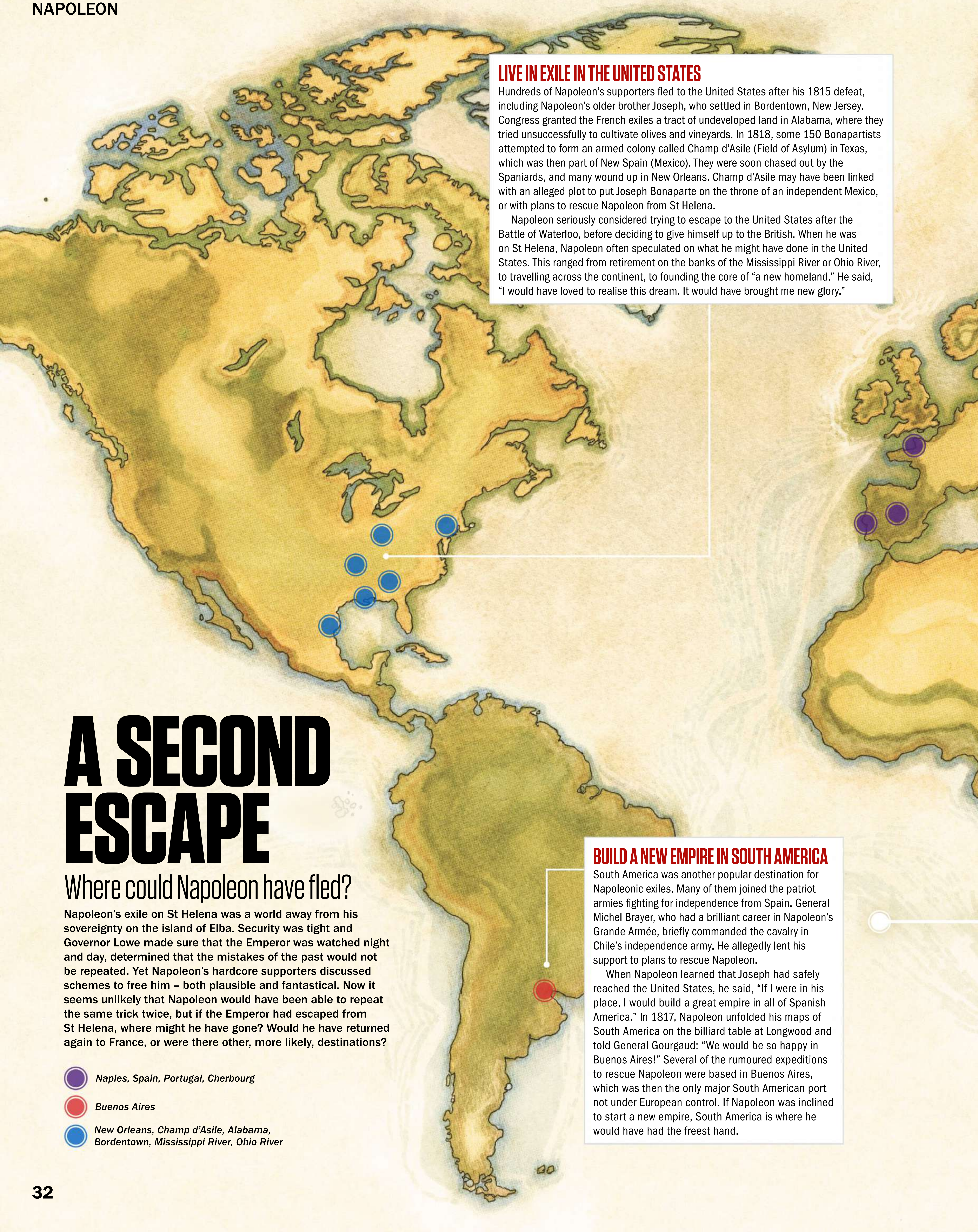


A SECOND ESCAPE

Where could Napoleon have fled?

Napoleon's exile on St Helena was a world away from his sovereignty on the island of Elba. Security was tight and Governor Lowe made sure that the Emperor was watched night and day, determined that the mistakes of the past would not be repeated. Yet Napoleon's hardcore supporters discussed schemes to free him – both plausible and fantastical. Now it seems unlikely that Napoleon would have been able to repeat the same trick twice, but if the Emperor had escaped from St Helena, where might he have gone? Would he have returned again to France, or were there other, more likely, destinations?

● ***Naples, Spain, Portugal, Cherbourg***

● ***Buenos Aires***

● ***New Orleans, Champ d'Asile, Alabama, Bordentown, Mississippi River, Ohio River***

LIVE IN EXILE IN THE UNITED STATES

Hundreds of Napoleon's supporters fled to the United States after his 1815 defeat, including Napoleon's older brother Joseph, who settled in Bordentown, New Jersey. Congress granted the French exiles a tract of undeveloped land in Alabama, where they tried unsuccessfully to cultivate olives and vineyards. In 1818, some 150 Bonapartists attempted to form an armed colony called Champ d'Asile (Field of Asylum) in Texas, which was then part of New Spain (Mexico). They were soon chased out by the Spaniards, and many wound up in New Orleans. Champ d'Asile may have been linked with an alleged plot to put Joseph Bonaparte on the throne of an independent Mexico, or with plans to rescue Napoleon from St Helena.

Napoleon seriously considered trying to escape to the United States after the Battle of Waterloo, before deciding to give himself up to the British. When he was on St Helena, Napoleon often speculated on what he might have done in the United States. This ranged from retirement on the banks of the Mississippi River or Ohio River, to travelling across the continent, to founding the core of "a new homeland." He said, "I would have loved to realise this dream. It would have brought me new glory."

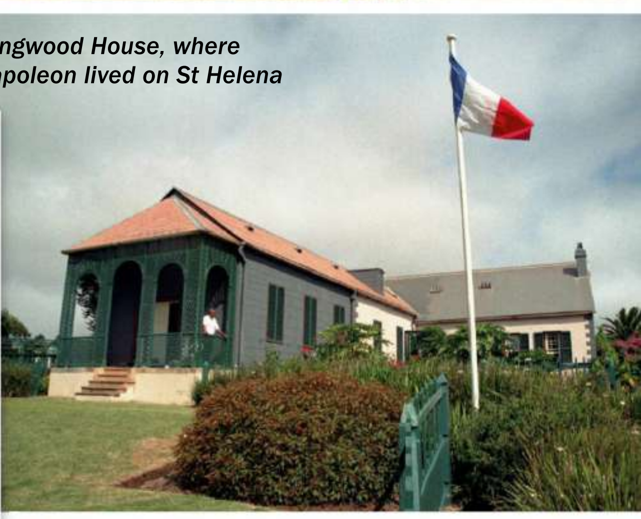
BUILD A NEW EMPIRE IN SOUTH AMERICA

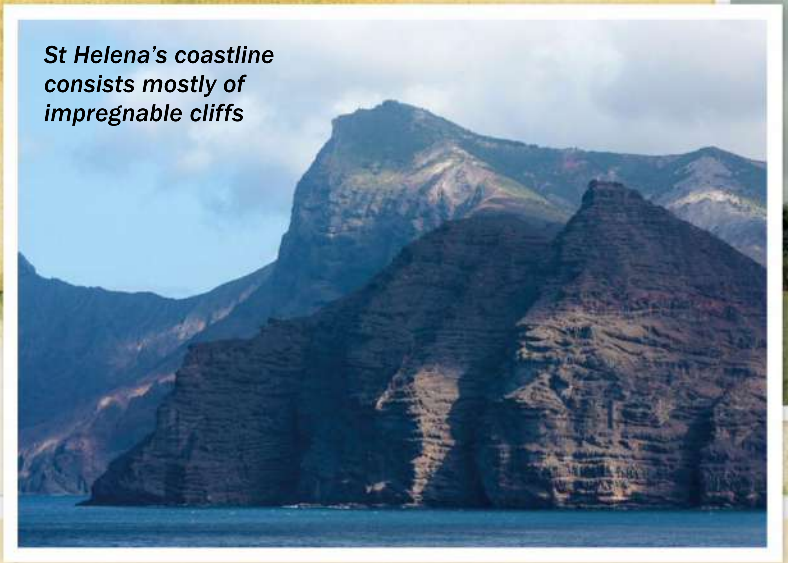
South America was another popular destination for Napoleonic exiles. Many of them joined the patriot armies fighting for independence from Spain. General Michel Brayer, who had a brilliant career in Napoleon's Grande Armée, briefly commanded the cavalry in Chile's independence army. He allegedly lent his support to plans to rescue Napoleon.

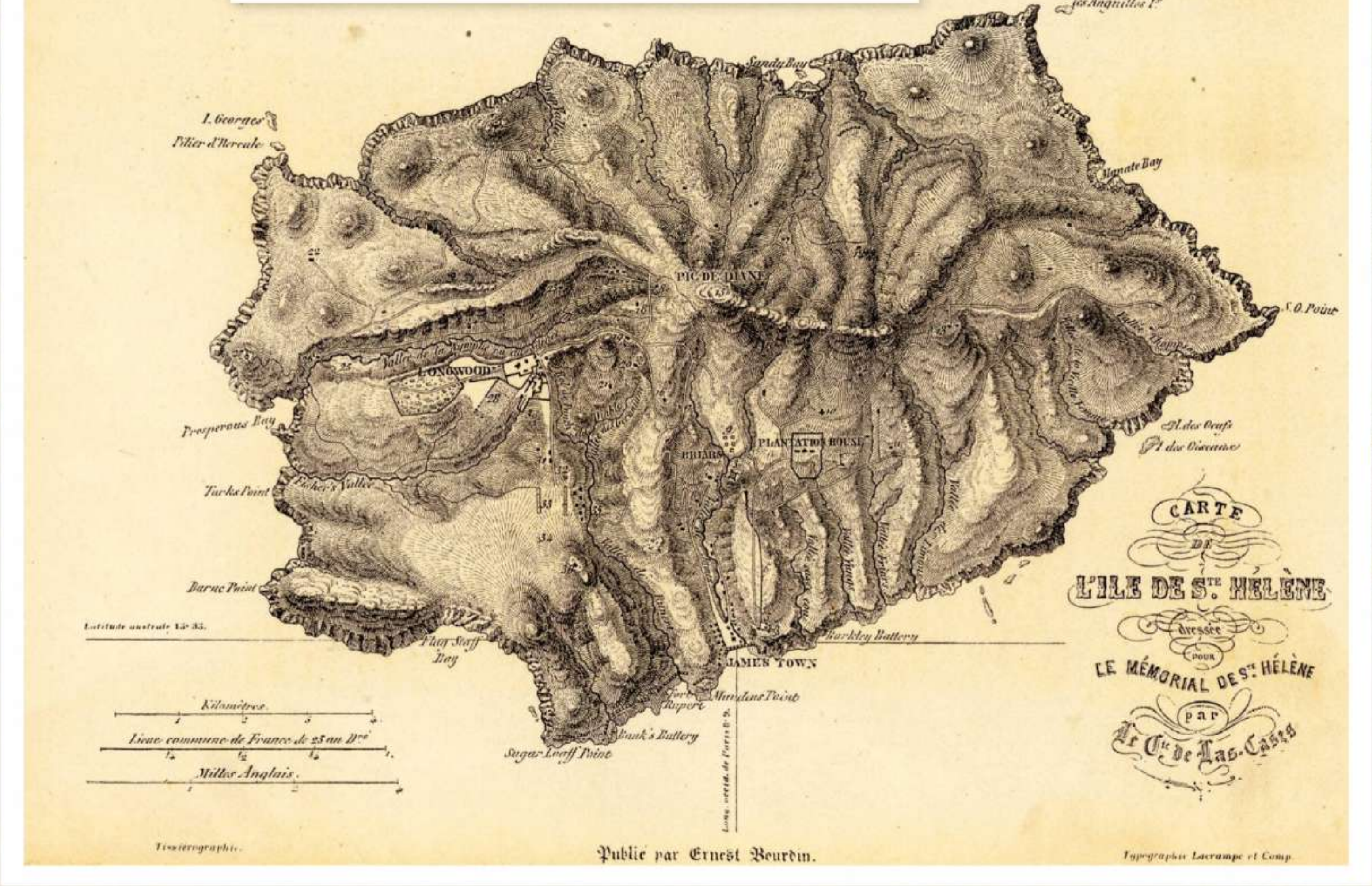
When Napoleon learned that Joseph had safely reached the United States, he said, "If I were in his place, I would build a great empire in all of Spanish America." In 1817, Napoleon unfolded his maps of South America on the billiard table at Longwood and told General Gourgaud: "We would be so happy in Buenos Aires!" Several of the rumoured expeditions to rescue Napoleon were based in Buenos Aires, which was then the only major South American port not under European control. If Napoleon was inclined to start a new empire, South America is where he would have had the freest hand.

JOIN THE REVOLUTIONS IN EUROPE

Europe was in no mood to welcome Napoleon in the years immediately after the Battle of Waterloo. But in 1820 there were revolutions in Naples, Spain and Portugal, and revolutionary conspiracies in France. Napoleon's supporters were involved in these all events. It's rumoured that the ultimate goal of a Brazil-based rescue plot was to return Napoleon to France. A letter intercepted by Lowe said that after Napoleon secured Spain: "France must surrender, for both soldiers and people long for him and sigh for him. There is not the least doubt… the exalted hero will have greater fleets and armies than ever." The French government feared Napoleon's return could plunge France into a civil war, and in November 1820 rumours that he had escaped led to a half-percent fall in French stock. After Napoleon died, Lord Bathurst admitted that as long as Napoleon lived "the large body of the discontented in France (and indeed elsewhere) had a rallying point to look to, and there could be no doubt that his escape would at any time have been followed by a fearful result".


Longwood House, where Napoleon lived on St Helena


St Helena's coastline consists mostly of impregnable cliffs


CARTE
DE
L'ILE DE S.TE HÉLÈNE
dressée
pour
LE MÉMORIAL DE S.T HÉLÈNE
par
Le C.te de Las-Cases
Publié par Ernest Bourdin.
Sandy Bay
PIC DE DIANE
LONGWOOD
PLANTATION HOUSE
BRIARS
JAMES TOWN
Prosperous Bay
Turks Point
Barne Point
Flag Staff Bay
Sugar Loaf Point
Bank's Battery
Munden's Point
Buckley Battery
Kilomètres
Milles Anglais

Right: *A detailed map of St Helena, Napoleon's infamous island prison*

Images © Alamy

mentions throughout the century in titles such as *The Naval Chronicle*, in 1834, and inventor Robert Fulton (who had designed a submarine called The Nautilus in 1897) was rumoured to have spoken to Johnson. Of course we will never truly know the extent to which Johnson's claims had any basis in truth.

Submarine plots aside, did Napoleon ever cooperate with escape plans? "I don't believe Napoleon would ever have been willing to cooperate with any such plots," says Unwin. "St Helena is virtually impregnable. It's mainly volcanic cliffs all the way around. There are no real beaches, and I think Napoleon would not have suffered the indignity of trying to be rescued, which almost inevitably would have been prevented. If he'd ever got on a boat it would have been intercepted, and he'd have been blown out of the water. That was not the end Napoleon wanted."

A poison plot?

In reality, Napoleon's end was a slow and painful one, dying in bed on 5 May 1821. Perhaps in those final moments he may have wished he had accepted one of the many offers of escape – particularly if the rumours of his being poisoned are to be believed. These stories, spread quickly after Napoleon's passing, state that the Emperor was the victim of a sinister plot by the British government, orchestrated by Lowe. The person behind these tales was one Barry O'Meara, an Irish doctor and naval officer who acted as Napoleon's surgeon during part of his exile on St Helena. In his book *Napoleon's Poisoned Chalice: The Emperor And His Doctors On St Helena,* historian Dr Martin Howard describes O'Meara as someone who "remains an elusive figure. His life prior to his fraught appointment as Napoleon's surgeon was apparently unremarkable". It was O'Meara who, following the Emperor's death, claimed that Lowe had on one occasion remarked that it might not be a bad thing if O'Meara were to shorten Napoleon's life.

"IF HE'D EVER GOT ON A BOAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN INTERCEPTED, AND HE'D HAVE BEEN BLOWN OUT OF THE WATER. THAT WAS NOT THE END NAPOLEON WANTED"

O'Meara remains a controversial figure and the subject of much debate, largely due to his loyalty being torn between his country and his patient. In *Quincentenary: A Story Of St Helena*, one-time governor of the island David L Smallman describes O'Meara as having "played a duplicitous game from the start, giving Hudson Lowe the impression he was conveying secrets from the table at Longwood, whilst maintaining a clandestine correspondence in support of the exiles with a clerk at the admiralty in London". After several long disputes with Lowe, O'Meara was fired. It was afterwards that he spread the rumour that he was asked to poison the Emperor. In *Napoleon's Doctor: The St Helena Diaries Of Barry O'Meara*, Hubert O'Connor attempts to redeem the doctor, stating that "in England, O'Meara's reputation has suffered then and since from the ambiguities of the situation".

Whatever his motivation, O'Meara's accusations had a lasting impact and some of the immediate, and unusual, circumstances of Napoleon's death appeared to add weight to the rumour. Unwin explains: "They put Napoleon in four coffins, one mahogany, one lead, and the coffin in which his body was laid was tin plate. They were then buried deep with large stones above it." He adds that these arrangements were "to prevent him escaping even when he was dead". The introduction to an 1889 edition of the works of Barry O'Meara remarks upon a further oddity in the story, namely that O'Meara's comments went unchallenged, stating: "The only really satisfactory way of answering O'Meara's accusations was to try him by court-martial for it." Despite being dismissed, O'Meara never had to formally answer for his accusations.

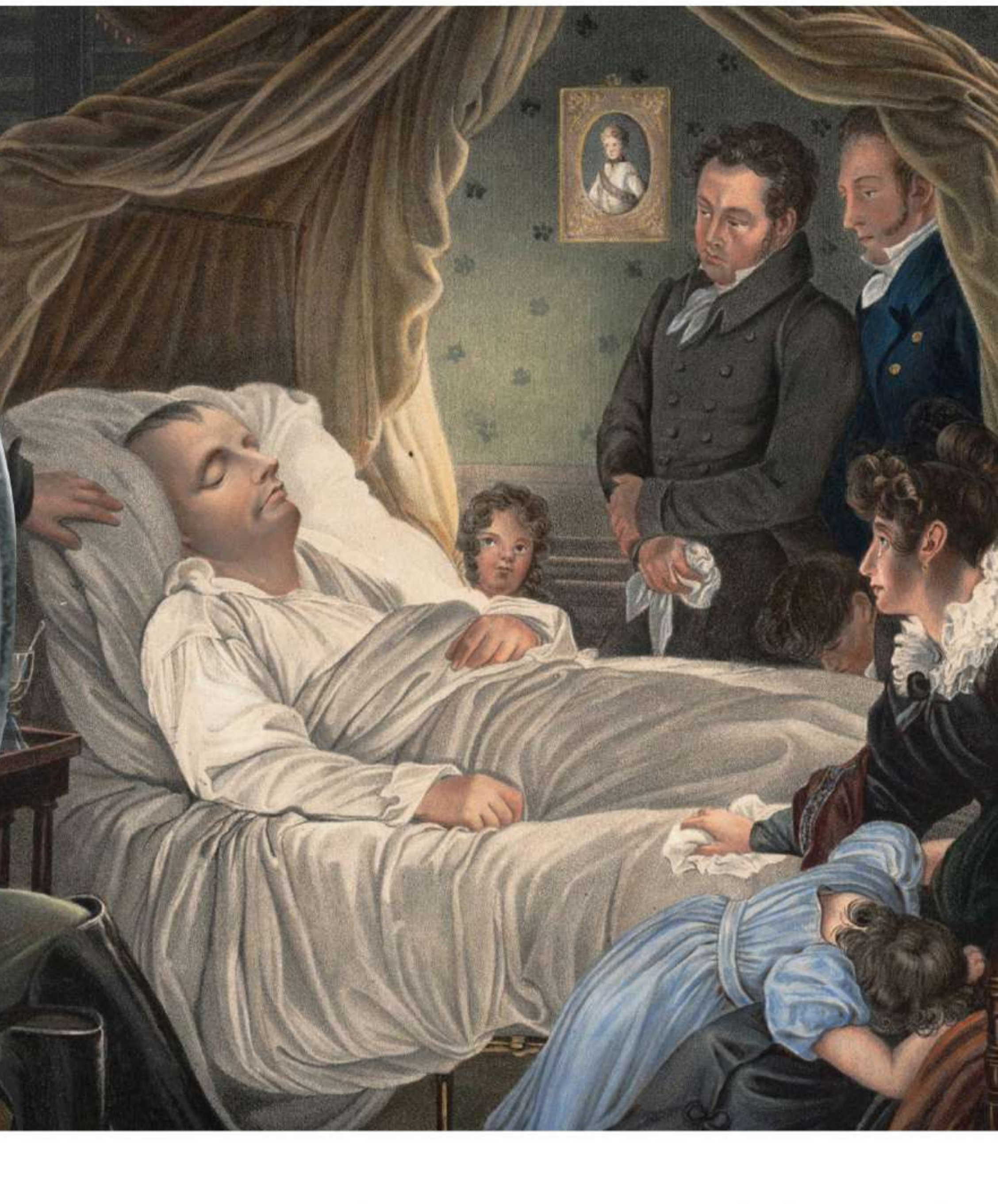
Decades later, this theory was given some weight when a forensic study of the long-dead Emperor's hair appeared to show high levels of arsenic. However, according to Unwin this too appears to have been discredited: "The arsenic theory, I think, has been convincingly disproved.

Below: *Commemorative coins were struck to mark the return of Napoleon's remains to France*

Below, right: *Charles de Steuben's painting shows Napoleon on his deathbed on St Helena in 1821*

© Alamy

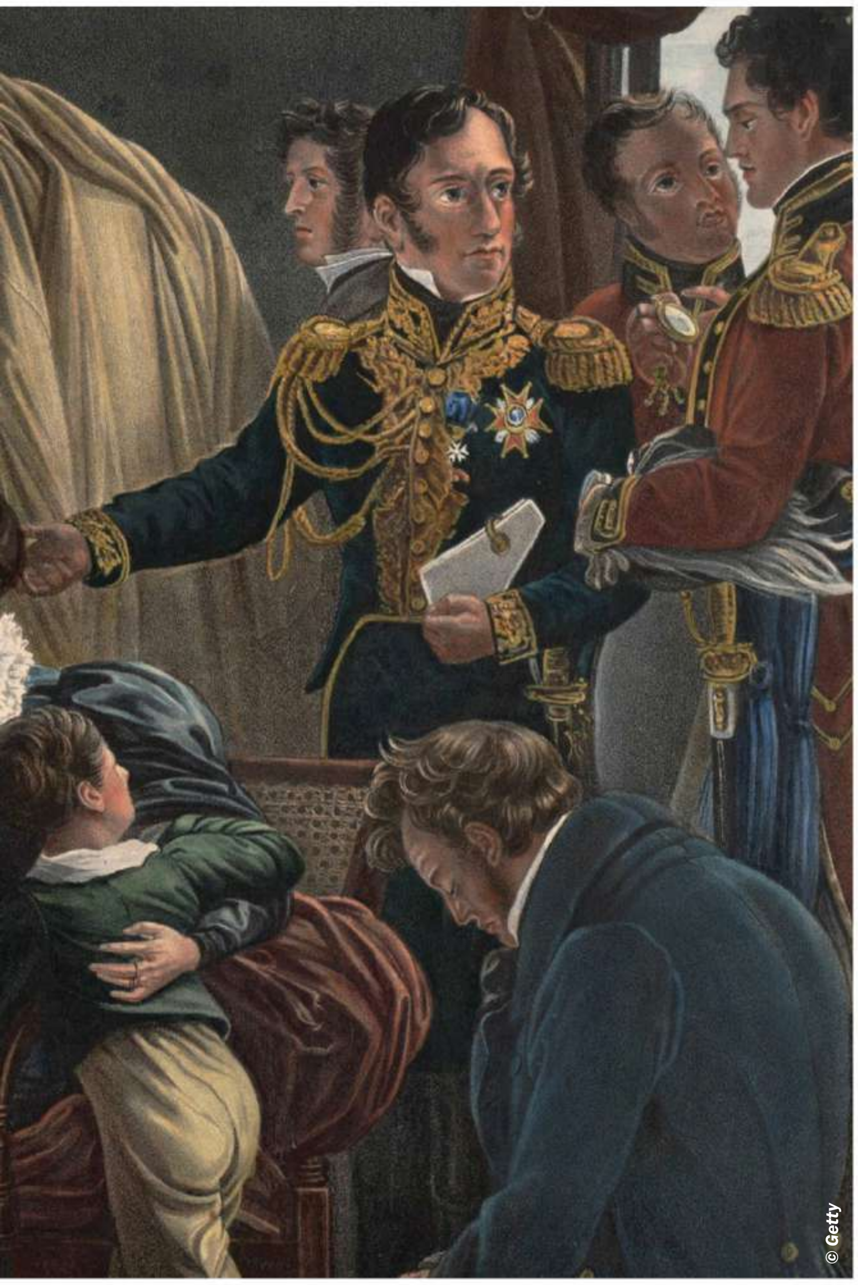
SAINTE HÉLÈNE V MAI MDCCCXXI
JE DÉSIRE QUE MES CENDRES REPOSENT
SUR LES BORDS DE LA SEINE,
AU MILIEU DE CE PEUPLE FRANÇAIS
QUE J'AI TANT AIMÉ.



It's true that tests on hair samples of Napoleon that survived showed a high arsenic content, but tests on other contemporaries (even his first wife Josephine) were just as high because arsenic was used in paint, in makeup, and so on. The postmortem on Napoleon, which was carried out by his own doctor, showed that he had suffered from gastric carcinoma – cancer in his stomach."

In his book *The Death Of Napoleon: The Last Campaign*, J Thomas Hindmarsh analyses the levels of arsenic found within the hair samples and presents evidence as to why arsenic poisoning would have been impossible. Summarising his arguments he claims that "high levels have been reported from 1805, 1814, 1816 and 1818, and no poisoner takes 15 years to kill his victim, he does this in a matter of weeks or months". Hindmarsh continues: "Napoleon had none of the specific features of chronic arsenic poisoning (continuous progressive weight loss, skin changes, irreversible nerve damage) for the 15 years he was supposed to be poisoned."

Despite the continuing popularity of conspiracy theories surrounding Napoleon's death, there is consensus among historians. "I think most historians, both French and British and others, have now agreed that his death was due to some form of stomach cancer," Unwin concludes. "His father had stomach cancer [and] Napoleon's last months were really agonising. He was fat, unfit, had swollen legs, bleeding gums, and was suffering from dreadful stomach pains. So it was really a terrible ending to such a great man."



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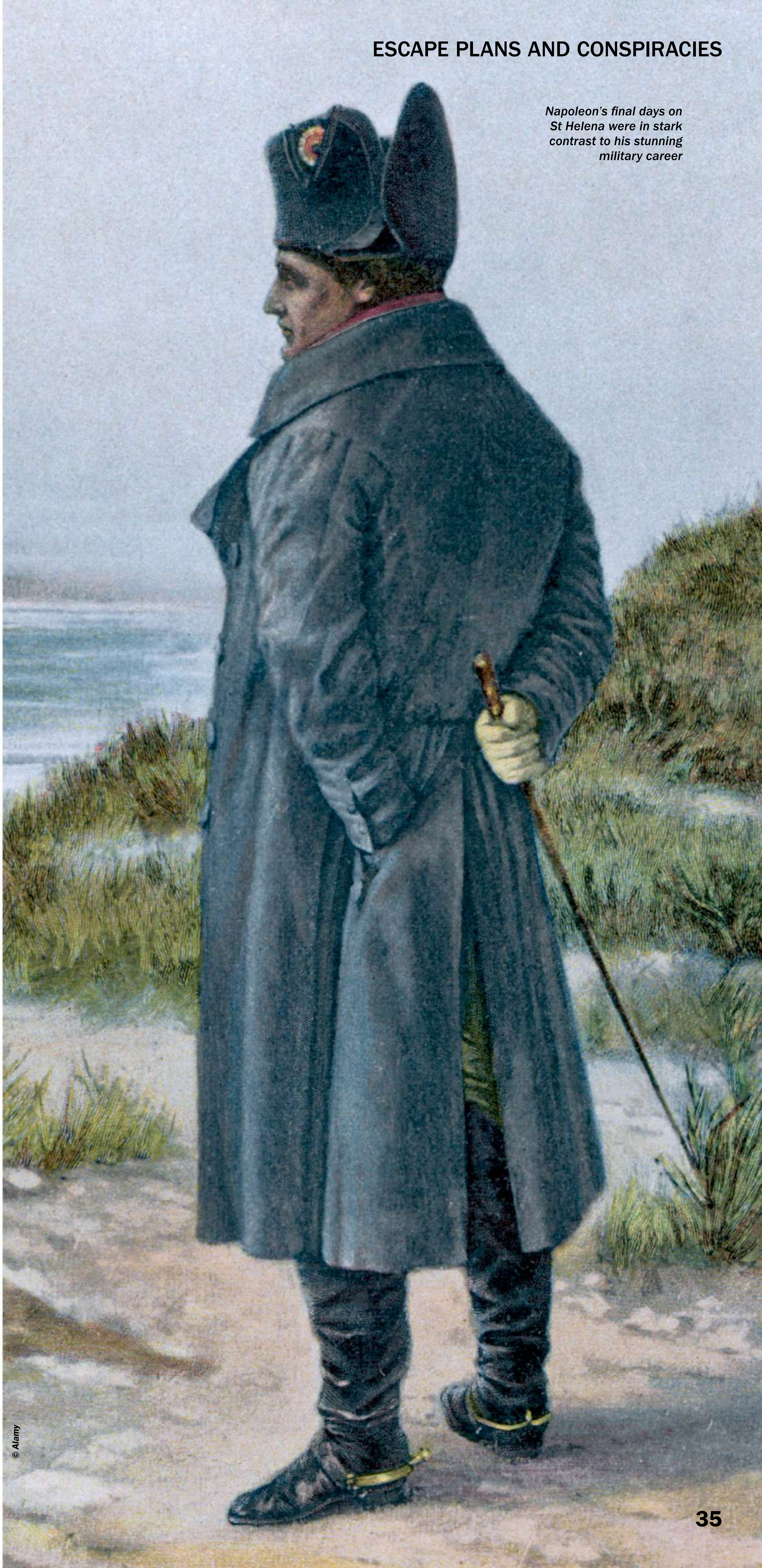


Napoleon's final days on St Helena were in stark contrast to his stunning military career

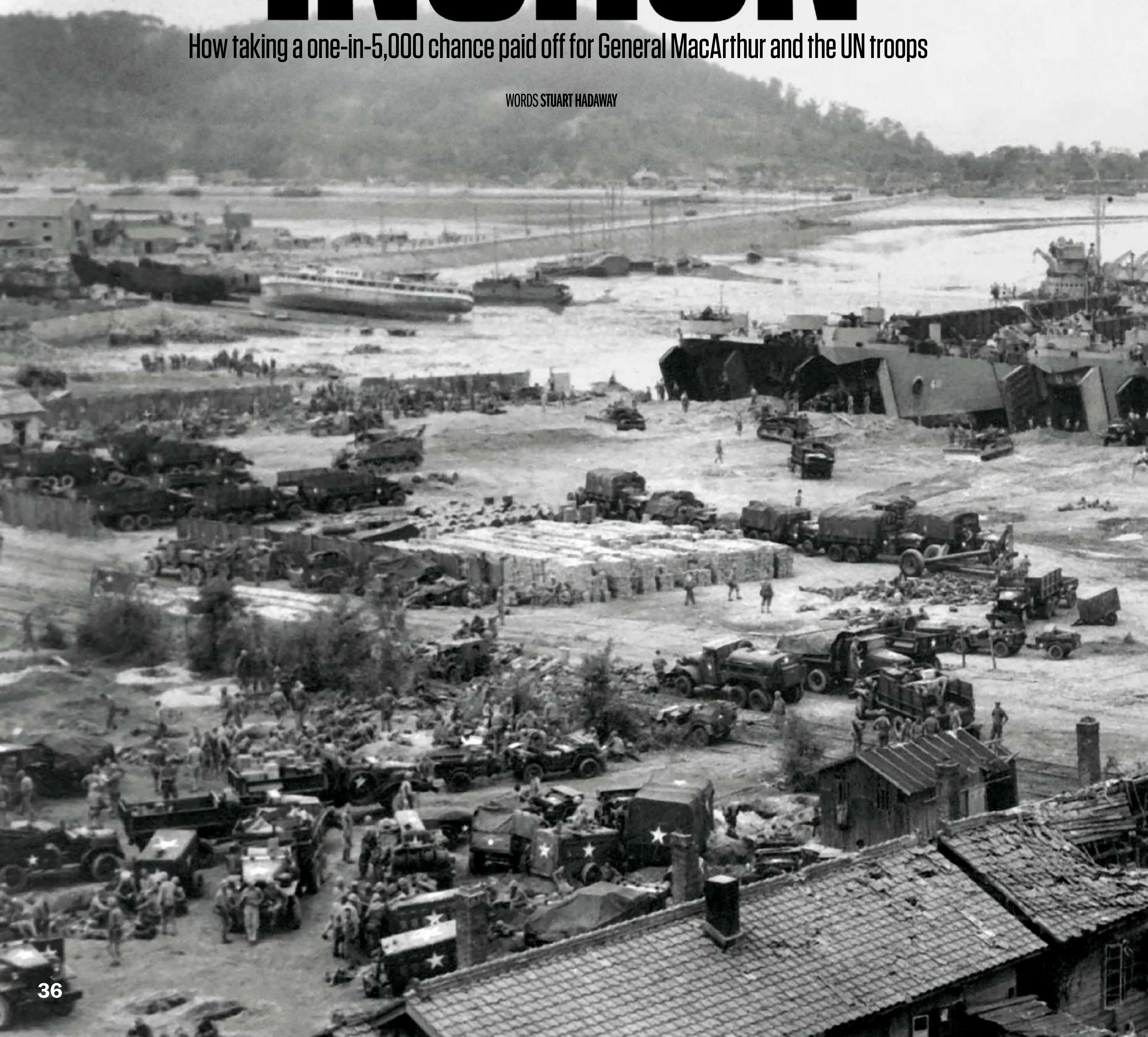
© Alamy

SOUTH KOREA 15 SEPTEMBER 1950

INCHON

How taking a one-in-5,000 chance paid off for General MacArthur and the UN troops

WORDS **STUART HADAWAY**



Even its main proponent, US General Douglas MacArthur, only gave this desperate military gamble a one-in-5,000 chance for success, but it turned the tide of a war that still shapes today's world.

The legacy of the Korean War (1950-53) is still a stark feature on the global landscape, with the fluctuating relations between the communist north (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea – DPRK) and the democratic south (the Republic of Korea – RoK) having far-reaching repercussions across the world.

The partition of Korea dates back to 1945, when the country was liberated from over 40 years of Japanese rule and divided along the 38th parallel. The Soviets had occupied the north, establishing a communist government, while the USA had occupied the south and established a highly corrupt but at least nominally democratic rule. The state of affairs was recognised by the United Nations in August 1948, and at the end of the year the Soviets had withdrawn their occupation forces, leaving behind an established military and considerable amounts of hardware. The US forces withdrew in June 1949, leaving a small and poorly equipped RoK army.

For the North Koreans, it made sense to strike as soon as possible to 're-unite' the country under their rule. The north was much larger – 124,000 square kilometres against the south's 96,000 – but had a far smaller population – just nine million against the south's 21 million. However, the DPRK's military at that time was the larger of the two, with 223,000 trained and experienced troops (albeit at insurgency and irregular warfare), large numbers of T-34 tanks and over 100 former Soviet aircraft. The South's army was a ramshackle 98,000 poorly trained troops with little heavy weaponry. The North seized its chance, and at 4am on 25 June 1950 its forces swept south.

The DPRK's army shattered the RoK's. On 3 July, Seoul, the capital of South Korea, fell. Only around 64km (40 miles) from the 38th parallel, the city stood in the north-western corner of the country, and the remains of the South's army began to stream towards Pusan (now known as Busan) in the south-eastern corner of the Korean peninsula.

The UN immediately moved to condemn the North's actions and (due to the Soviets' having walked out of Council meetings earlier) a resolution was passed to send forces to defend South Korea. Many countries would send troops and resources to support the action, including British and Commonwealth forces, but the vast majority of the military muscle would be American, as would the senior commanders.

OPPOSING FORCES

UNITED NATIONS

COMMANDER
General Douglas MacArthur

INFANTRY
40,000

TANKS
80

VS

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

COMMANDER
Brigadier General Wan Yong

INFANTRY
35,000-38,0000

TANKS
40

Beached LCTs disgorge supplies on Beach Red

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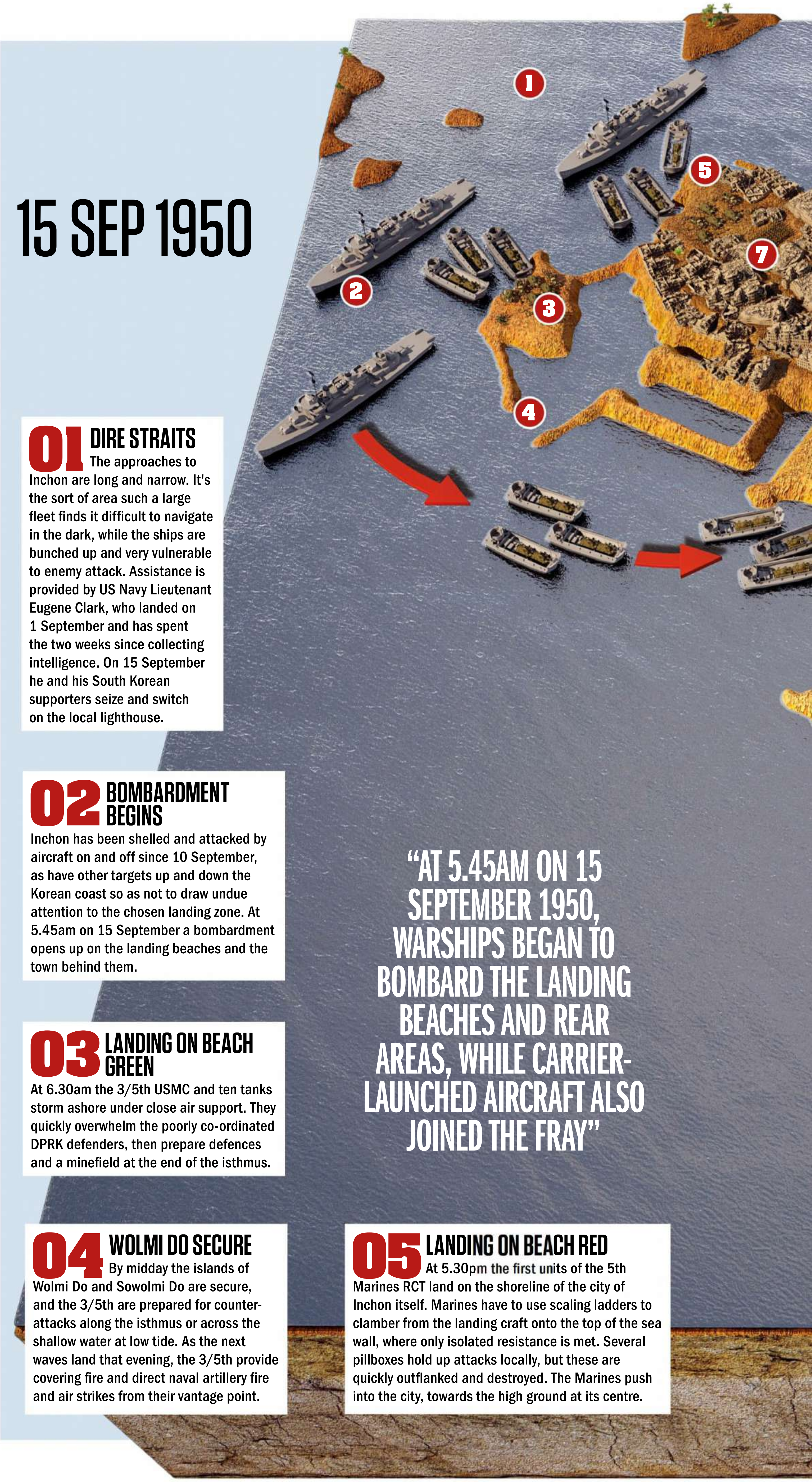
The US forces in the Far East were in a deplorable state, as were those in America itself. Only in Germany were full-strength divisions maintained, and elsewhere units from divisional level downwards were kept at well below their wartime strength. Training had also lapsed, with a focus on general education rather than weapons or tactical skills. The four divisions on occupation duties in Japan were quickly stripped to start making up full-strength units to throw into the fight; initially a single battalion (which was quickly overwhelmed) was sent and then a division, supported by further units, including a composite US Marine brigade and the British 27th Infantry Brigade. A fighting retreat developed that eventually led to a solid perimeter being formed around Pusan in the first week of August. With a front of 258km (160 miles), held by around 45,000 UN and South Korean troops of the US 8th Army, the line finally held. The communist forces, exhausted and scattered after their rapid advance south, could not break through.

The question for the UN forces was, what to do now? It was only a matter of time until their numerical and technological strength grew to the point where they could counter-attack, but how should they, and where? Breaking out of Pusan would be hard work and would lead to a 300km (186 mile) slog over mountainous terrain to liberate Seoul. Two elements immediately in their favour were air superiority and absolute control of the sea. The North's tiny navy had been neutralised, leaving the UN master of the long, vulnerable Korean coastline. Already aircraft carriers and commando forces were striking against the North's lines of communications.

Commander of the UN forces was General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, whose actions throughout an eventful career had made him a controversial figure. Strong-willed and opinionated, he held his military superiors and (especially) political masters in contempt. He wanted to be bold and land deep behind enemy lines, believing that only this would lead to swift re-conquest of the south: a landing to threaten the enemy's rear and force them to pull forces back, allowing the forces in Pusan to break out. They would then become a hammer to smash the enemy on the anvil of the beachhead, wherever it was decided that would be.

Opinions varied as to where the 'anvil' should be landed. MacArthur dismissed most options as being too close to Pusan, but became fixated on Inchon (now Incheon). It was in many ways a ridiculous choice. To reach it, a naval force would need to approach along a channel 13km (eight miles) long and only 1.6km (one mile) wide, and then land their forces on beaches where the tidal range was around 9.5 metres (31ft). Expansive mudflats close to land meant that landing craft tanks (LCTs) and other craft could only reach the shore at the very peak of the highest monthly tides. Any landing would have to be made by one wave landing at the dawn high tide, and the next wave at the dusk one. The beaches were lined with high sea walls, and high ground overlooked the whole area. An isthmus ran 800 metres (half a mile) out into the sea, leading to a large island called Wolmi Do, with another smaller island, Sowolmi Do, beyond it. These encircled most of the



15 SEP 1950

01 DIRE STRAITS

The approaches to Inchon are long and narrow. It's the sort of area such a large fleet finds it difficult to navigate in the dark, while the ships are bunched up and very vulnerable to enemy attack. Assistance is provided by US Navy Lieutenant Eugene Clark, who landed on 1 September and has spent the two weeks since collecting intelligence. On 15 September he and his South Korean supporters seize and switch on the local lighthouse.

02 BOMBARDMENT BEGINS

Inchon has been shelled and attacked by aircraft on and off since 10 September, as have other targets up and down the Korean coast so as not to draw undue attention to the chosen landing zone. At 5.45am on 15 September a bombardment opens up on the landing beaches and the town behind them.

03 LANDING ON BEACH GREEN

At 6.30am the 3/5th USMC and ten tanks storm ashore under close air support. They quickly overwhelm the poorly co-ordinated DPRK defenders, then prepare defences and a minefield at the end of the isthmus.

04 WOLMI DO SECURE

By midday the islands of Wolmi Do and Sowolmi Do are secure, and the 3/5th are prepared for counter-attacks along the isthmus or across the shallow water at low tide. As the next waves land that evening, the 3/5th provide covering fire and direct naval artillery fire and air strikes from their vantage point.

05 LANDING ON BEACH RED

At 5.30pm the first units of the 5th Marines RCT land on the shoreline of the city of Inchon itself. Marines have to use scaling ladders to clamber from the landing craft onto the top of the sea wall, where only isolated resistance is met. Several pillboxes hold up attacks locally, but these are quickly outflanked and destroyed. The Marines push into the city, towards the high ground at its centre.

> "AT 5.45AM ON 15 SEPTEMBER 1950, WARSHIPS BEGAN TO BOMBARD THE LANDING BEACHES AND REAR AREAS, WHILE CARRIER-LAUNCHED AIRCRAFT ALSO JOINED THE FRAY"

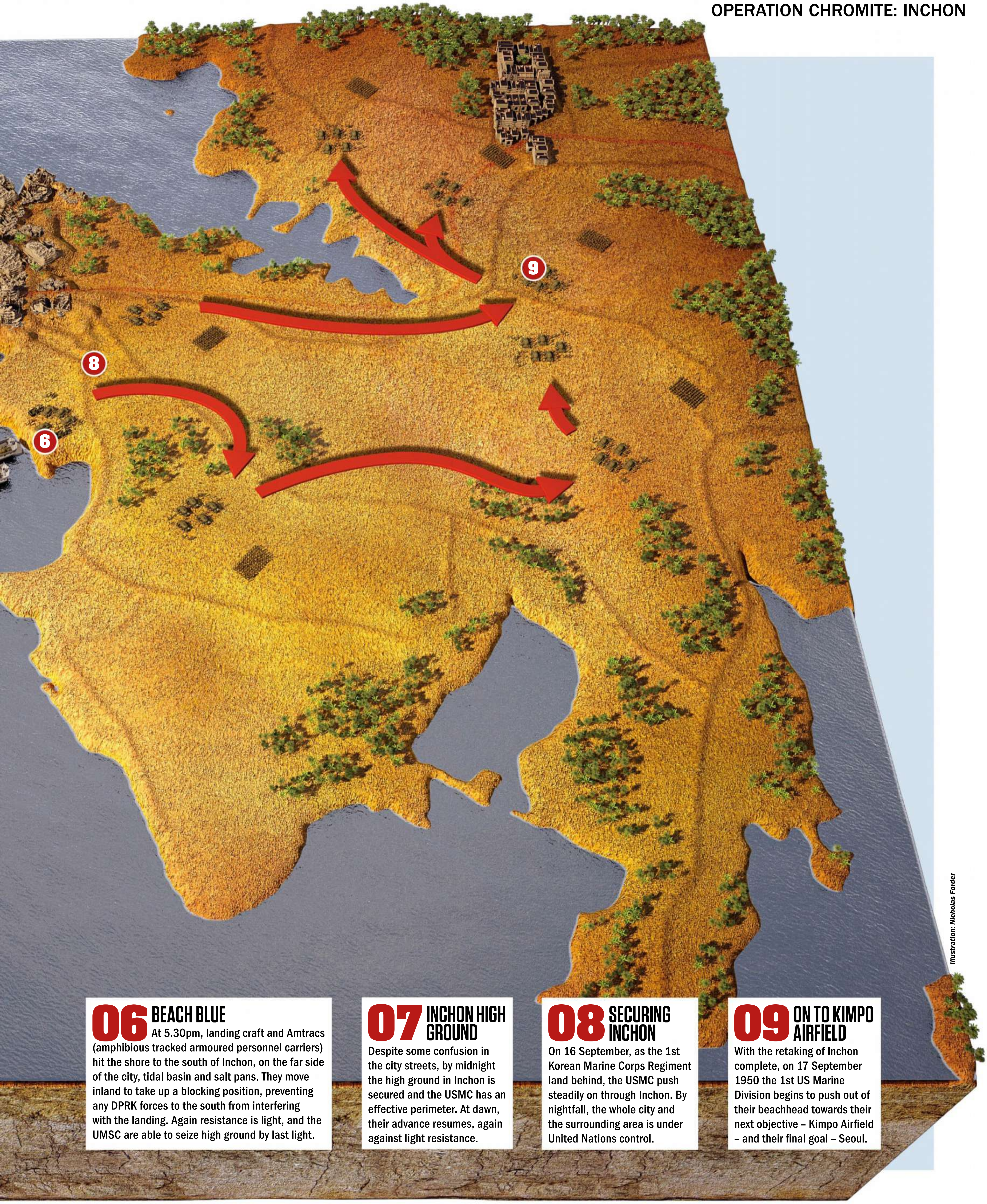


Illustration: Nicholas Forder

06 BEACH BLUE

At 5.30pm, landing craft and Amtracs (amphibious tracked armoured personnel carriers) hit the shore to the south of Inchon, on the far side of the city, tidal basin and salt pans. They move inland to take up a blocking position, preventing any DPRK forces to the south from interfering with the landing. Again resistance is light, and the UMSC are able to seize high ground by last light.

07 INCHON HIGH GROUND

Despite some confusion in the city streets, by midnight the high ground in Inchon is secured and the USMC has an effective perimeter. At dawn, their advance resumes, again against light resistance.

08 SECURING INCHON

On 16 September, as the 1st Korean Marine Corps Regiment land behind, the USMC push steadily on through Inchon. By nightfall, the whole city and the surrounding area is under United Nations control.

09 ON TO KIMPO AIRFIELD

With the retaking of Inchon complete, on 17 September 1950 the 1st US Marine Division begins to push out of their beachhead towards their next objective – Kimpo Airfield – and their final goal – Seoul.

harbour area. Militarily, it seemed lunacy, and even MacArthur, who had to argue for the idea against not only his superiors but also most of his own subordinates, only gave it a one-in-5,000 chance of success.

However, MacArthur was also a born self-publicist, ever aware of his image and how it could be bolstered by his defeating such odds. In truth, he knew that the operation had several factors in its favour. The sheer unlikeliness of Inchon as a target, for all the above reasons, meant it was thinly defended. It was also only 16km (ten miles) from Kimpo (now known as Gimpo) Airfield, the largest and best airfield in the country, and as far again beyond that was Seoul. A fast seizure of the airfield would help MacArthur's forces immensely, while the swift liberation of Seoul would be an incredible boost to morale.

With Inchon decided, MacArthur set about organising the landing – the first major seaborne operation since 1945. Much of the vast amphibious infrastructure that had won the Pacific campaign had been dismantled, but the experienced staff were still there. Landing craft were gathered (including ones sold to Japan as coastal shipping, to replace vessels sunk during WWII), and a supporting fleet assembled. But troops were harder to find. The US Marine Corps (USMC) was being downsized almost out of existence, reduced to shipboard contingents instead of expeditionary forces. However, enough were gathered from the US and the forces already in Korea to form the 1st US Marine Division. As in the army, training had suffered, but (also as in the army) the senior NCO and officer ranks contained a core of experienced, battle-hardened men who began to whip their troops into shape. The US 7th Infantry Division was also gathered, and together the two divisions would form the US 10th Corps, under the command of a relatively inexperienced officer who was a protégé of MacArthur.

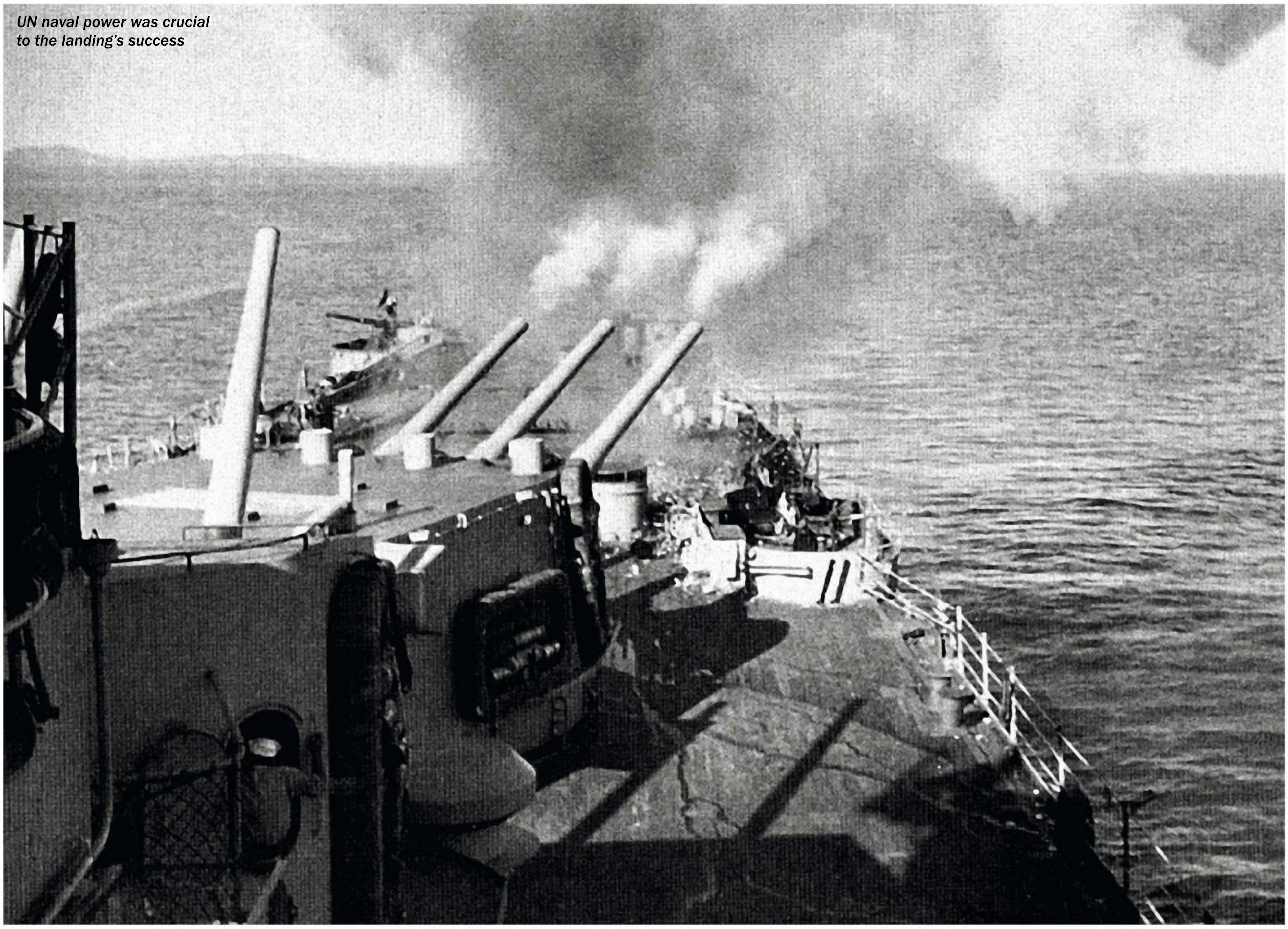
Over 250 ships and boats of all sizes (nearly all of them American) were gathered and set course for Inchon. The US 1st Marine Division would make the initial landings, although one-third of it (the 7th Regiment) was still en route, their place being taken by the 1st Korean Marine Corps Regiment. The 7th Division would follow (with the missing Marine regiment) a week behind. During the days before the landings, UN aircraft and ships attacked the defences at Inchon and elsewhere. After only a month's preparation, the fleet entered the channel of Inchon.

> “A FAST SEIZURE OF KIMPO AIRFIELD WOULD HELP MACARTHUR’S FORCES, WHILE THE SWIFT LIBERATION OF SEOUL WOULD BE AN INCREDIBLE BOOST TO MORALE”

At 5.45am on 15 September 1950, warships began to bombard the landing beaches and rear areas, while carrier-launched aircraft also joined the fray. The fire focused on the first objective: the island of Wolmi Do. At 6.30am, the morning high tide, 3rd Battalion 5th Marine Regiment (3/5th) landed on Beach Green, on the north-western corner of Wolmi Do near the isthmus to the mainland. Supported by ten tanks, they secured the island and Sowolmi Do by midday. Bombardments of the mainland continued while the fleet waited for the next high tide.

Towards 5pm the shelling intensified. Two Regimental Combat Teams (RCTs – three battalions totalling over 1,000 combat troops plus heavy weapons companies) prepared themselves. At 5.30pm the main landing was made. At Beach Red, on the shorefront of the town of Inchon itself, the 5th Marines RCT (less the 3/5th on Wolmi Do) had to use scaling ladders to clamber from their landing craft up over the high sea wall. They advanced rapidly through the harbour and into the city streets, desperate to reach their objectives before dark. A line of high ground – Cemetery Hill, British Consulate Hill and Observatory Hill – were stormed and taken against light resistance,

Marines of the 3/5th mop up on Wolmi Do



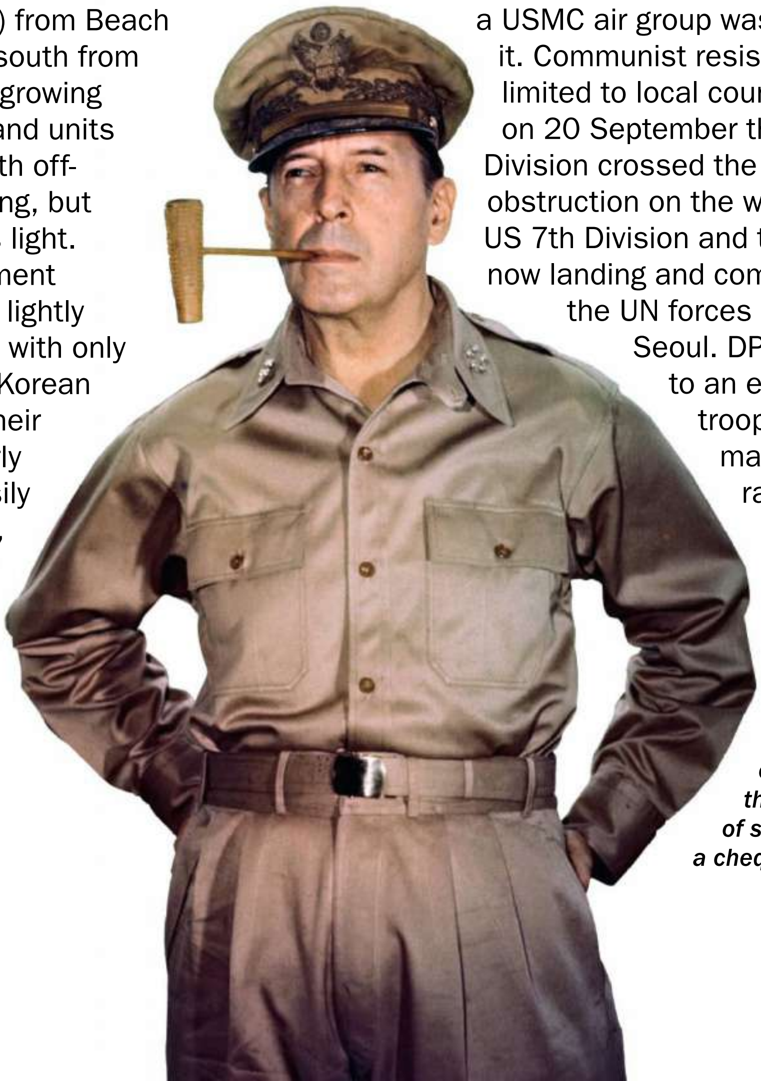
UN naval power was crucial to the landing's success

Images © Alamy

and a line established just over a kilometre inland, about halfway through Inchon town. Behind them, eight LCTs beached themselves, each carrying 500 tons of supplies to keep the Marines fighting until the next high tide.

Further south, on Beach Blue, the 1st Marines RCT landed on the far side of the salt pans and tidal basins, some 4km (two-and-a-half miles) from Beach Red. Smoke drifting south from fires in Inchon and a growing fog limited visibility, and units became mixed up both off-shore and after landing, but again resistance was light. MacArthur's assessment that Inchon would be lightly guarded was correct, with only around 2,000 North Korean troops in the area. Their responses were poorly co-ordinated and easily dealt with piecemeal, and by dark the US Marines had established two solid, but separated, beachheads, while casualties had been remarkably light. The gamble had worked.

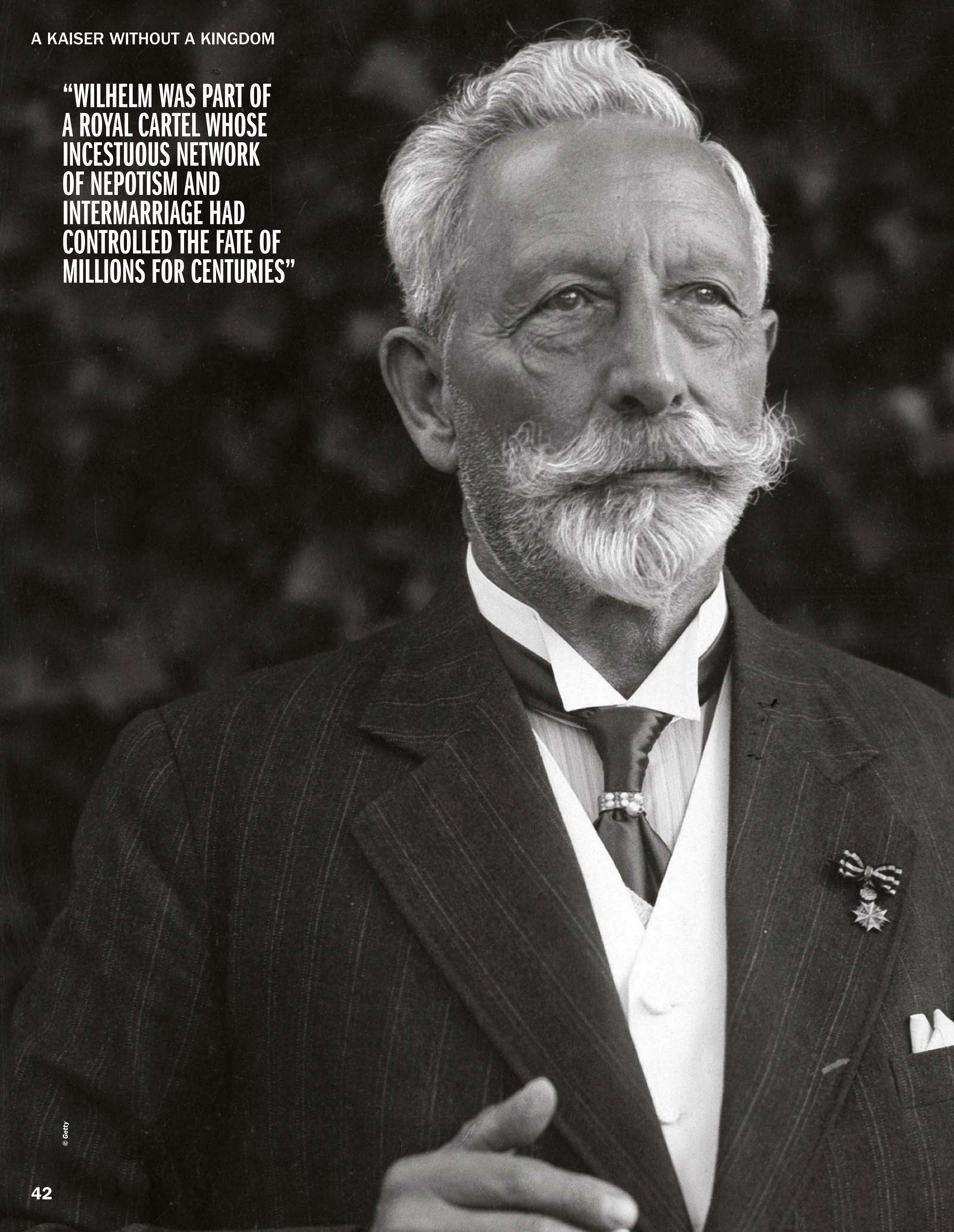
On the following day, the Marines continued their advance, linking their beachheads and pushing on towards Kimpo Airfield. Although garrisoned by around 3,000 troops from the DPRK 107th Security Regiment and 42nd Tank Regiment, resistance was again badly co-ordinated. By the evening of 17 September Kimpo was secured, and two days later a USMC air group was operating from it. Communist resistance was still limited to local counter-attacks, and on 20 September the 1st Marine Division crossed the River Han, a major obstruction on the way to Seoul. With the US 7th Division and the 7th USMC RCT now landing and coming up into the line, the UN forces began to surround Seoul. DPRK forces amounted to an estimated 33-35,000 troops in the area, but many of these were raw recruits, logistics troops or exhausted combat formations.



General Douglsa MacArthur was a controversial leader of the UN forces and a man of strong convictions, with a chequered track record

On 16 September, the UN forces at Pusan had begun their breakout, finally forcing the communists into retreat on 22 September. With the hammer of the US 8th Army coming up from the south, the North Korean forces were surrounded and in disarray. On 25 September the attack on Seoul began, and the following day the 8th Army linked up with 10th Corps. On 27 September, Seoul was officially liberated. The advance now began to push the North Koreans back across the 38th parallel, which was achieved by the end of the month. The South Korean forces then crossed the parallel, sparking an intervention by China and setting the conditions that would lead to three years of bloody stalemate. MacArthur was sacked soon after for his cavalier attitude to the orders of his political masters and his plans to escalate to nuclear warfare.

However, his plan for Inchon had been a masterstroke. A landing nearly 300km (186 miles) behind enemy lines on an unsuitable shore had succeeded, and been followed by a 32km (20-mile) advance to liberate the RoK capital just three months after it had fallen. The operation had been planned and executed in rapid time with inadequate resources and no rehearsals. The US 10th Corps had suffered some 580 men killed or missing and around 2,400 wounded, but had killed 18,000 of the enemy and captured a further 6,000 while shattering the North Korean occupation of the South.



“WILHELM WAS PART OF A ROYAL CARTEL WHOSE INCESTUOUS NETWORK OF NEPOTISM AND INTERMARRIAGE HAD CONTROLLED THE FATE OF MILLIONS FOR CENTURIES”

© Getty

A controversial man, Kaiser Wilhelm II often claimed to be the favourite grandson of Queen Victoria. Possessing a violent temper, he is often attributed with starting World War I

© David Liuzzo

A KAISER WITHOUT A KINGDOM

After defeat in the First World War, Wilhelm II ended his days in exile, watching as Germany was consumed by Nazism

WORDS **NICK SOLDINGER**

At 5am on Sunday 10 November 1918, a convoy of nine Daimler touring cars raced through the Belgian countryside towards the Dutch border. Inside were officers loyal to the Imperial German Army and with them – in full military attire, complete with a chest full of medals he'd awarded himself – was the German monarch Kaiser Wilhelm II. The landscape around them was barren and broken, shattered by four-and-a-half years of war, the scale and destructiveness of which had never been witnessed before. More than four million men had been killed fighting over bleak stretches of land like that on which the cars now sped. Although the fighting was all but over, many of those who'd survived it – Germans included – would happily have lynched the man whose arrogance, aggression and insecurities had caused the conflict in the first place: the man known in Europe as Kaiser Bill.

Wilhelm was part of a royal cartel whose incestuous network of nepotism and intermarriage had controlled the fate of millions for centuries. But the old order was now crumbling and the maps were being redrawn. The Ottoman Empire, which had controlled Turkey and much of the Middle East for more than 600 years, was in its death throes. The Habsburg Empire, which had dominated central Europe for nearly 400 years, was already dead, while in Russia the kaiser's cousin Tsar Nicholas II had been shot in a grubby basement by a new breed of revolutionaries who'd finally seen through the ancient scam of royal rule by 'divine right'.

These were dangerous times to be a monarch and, fearing a similar fate might befall their king, Germany's chiefs of staff persuaded Wilhelm that he must seek asylum in neutral Holland. With his throne already lost – a newly formed government in Berlin had declared the country a republic the day before – the kaiser had little choice but to flee for his life.

His heavily armed cavalcade reached the Netherlands at about 6am, throwing officials at the minor border crossing of Eijsden into a panic. Forms were filled out and phone calls made as the Dutch authorities decided what to do with the controversial figure who'd just turned up on their doorstep. The kaiser and his entourage parked at the train station and waited.

As the day wore on, news began to seep out of this sleepy settlement that Europe's most wanted man was strutting about its streets. His presence attracted a growing crowd of Belgian refugees, furious with him for the prolonged occupation of their country by his army. The kaiser's Imperial train was sent for, and when it arrived he sought refuge inside it away from the angry mob until word came from The Hague that Holland's Queen Wilhelmina would indeed grant her beleaguered fellow royal the asylum he was after.

It was a huge risk on her part. Revolutionary tensions were high throughout Europe. So high, in fact, that Britain's King George V had refused to allow Tsar Nicholas II – his own cousin – sanctuary in London for fear it might provoke a communist uprising in his own country. In Holland, though, the aristocratic order closed ranks. Wilhelm might be a war criminal, as many were now calling him, but he was still one of their own. Favours were quickly called in and by 11 November the kaiser found himself the guest of Count Godard Bentinck van Aldenburg at Amerongen Castle. At 11am that day – with its principle instigator officially in exile – the catastrophe that came to be known as The Great War came to an end. The bodies, which were still being buried, would eventually total 17 million. On 28 November, the kaiser issued a statement of abdication, bringing to an end the House of Hohenzollern's 350-year-long rule over Prussia in the process.

Kaiser Bill's stay with the count was amicable but short-lived. In 1919, he purchased a 24-room manor house on an 86-acre estate in Doorn, in the Utrecht Hills. The property may have been modest compared to the palaces he'd known as one of Europe's most privileged men but, despite his refugee status, the kaiser was not a poor man. He still owned property throughout Germany, and just before the outbreak of World War II his assets were yielding the modern equivalent of £12 million a year. A train was sent to collect his personal possessions from his previous residence, the New Palace at Potsdam. It returned with 23 wagons of furniture and 27 of other assorted items, including cars and a boat.

> “HIS INSECURITIES AND PERSONAL AMBITION HAD PLUNGED THE WHOLE WORLD INTO WAR, AND YET HE REMAINED UNABLE TO RECOGNISE THAT HE WAS IN ANY WAY ACCOUNTABLE”

Not that the disgraced monarch would be doing much travelling: the Dutch government insisted on certain restrictions in exchange for allowing Wilhelm to stay in the Netherlands, one of which limited his freedom of movement to within a 15-mile radius of his property. If he wanted to travel any further afield than that he needed to obtain permission beforehand from local officials. Wilhelm, however, never asked. He may have been a kaiser without a kingdom but he would not subject himself to the indignity of genuflecting to mere bureaucrats.

So instead, Wilhelm established at his new home, known as Huis Doorn, a phony, scaled-down court. Majestic oil paintings were hung and its rooms crammed with grand furniture, while statues of himself and his ancestors were placed around its grounds and echoing hallways. Sitting on an old riding saddle he'd had converted into an office chair, Wilhelm began writing his memoirs. Everywhere his gaze fell there were yellowing photographs and dusty keepsakes reminding him that he had once been a man of importance, and his memoirs, he hoped, would restore him to the German throne by resurrecting his reputation.

The profound loss of status Wilhelm's calamitous decisions had resulted in was not just being felt by the dethroned king, however. In July 1920, his youngest son, Prince Joachim, fell into a deep depression over the fate of the Hohenzollern dynasty and committed suicide.

Further tragedy struck the following year when Wilhelm's second cousin and first wife Augusta Victoria collapsed from heart failure. Joachim's death combined with the shock of abdication and the family's exile had proved too much for her, and she died in April 1921.

Their marriage had lasted 40 years and produced seven children. Yet although Wilhelm was devastated, he was planning to remarry within months. At 34, the recently widowed Princess Hermine Reuss of Greiz was nearly 30 years younger than the 63-year-old kaiser. Despite the grumblings of his monarchist supporters and the objection of his surviving children, however, the ever-stubborn Wilhelm would not be deterred, and on 5 November 1922 they were married in a muted private ceremony in Doorn.

Princess Hermine brought with her five young children from her previous marriage, and with their arrival Wilhelm's manner mellowed. For years he'd played the part of the tough guy. A breech birth had left him with a withered left arm that wouldn't grow or function properly. It was something he was incredibly self-conscious of throughout his childhood. As he'd grown into a man this physical weakness, alongside a deep belief in the macho values of Prussian militarism, had seen him cultivate a public image as a disciplined hard man. The uniforms he wore, his spiked helmet and aggressive upturned wax moustache were all part of a carefully constructed costume. Wilhelm, his image yelled, was to be feared and so, too, was Germany. That costume now, though, was in the wardrobe. Wilhelm instead dressed in the attire of a country gent with a kindly white beard.

Despite his instant new family, however, life at Huis Doorn moved slowly for the old kaiser. He missed having a navy to play with or soldiers to move about a map. He missed the pomp and circumstance of the military parades, the gala dinners and the diplomatic parties.

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Kaiser WIlhelm II on one of his daily walks in Zandvoort, Holland, 1932

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***Right:** The desk of the exiled Kaiser Wilhelm II as it looked during his time at Doorn Manor in the Netherlands. Wilhelm lived here until his death in 1941*

Kaiser WIlhelm II and his first wife, Augusta Viktoria. The horrors of exile and the suicide of her son proved too much for her, and she died in 1921

Source: Wiki / PD / Gov

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THE KAISER & THE FÜHRER

How Wilhelm II courted the National Socialists

Before the Nazis even seized power Wilhelm had Hermine, an advocate of National Socialism, approach the Nazis. His aim was to persuade them to restore the monarchy and himself as kaiser. It's doubtful Hitler ever seriously considered Wilhelm's request, but he nevertheless sent Hermann Goering to visit Huis Doorn in January 1931 and again in May 1932 – with the second visit lasting a week. Nothing ever came about constitutionally from these visits, but a relationship was formed and the Hohenzollern family was granted a substantial annual allowance in exchange for a pledge not to publicly criticise Hitler or the Nazi party.

As time went on, though, this was a promise Wilhelm struggled to keep. In an interview in 1938, when Hitler's appeal was at its peak, he said of the Führer, "[Hitler] is a man alone, without family, without children, without God. He builds legions, but he doesn't build a nation. A nation is created by families, a religion, traditions… He's created an all-swallowing state, disdainful of the ancient structure of our race… And the man who alone incorporates in himself this whole state has neither a God to honour nor a dynasty to conserve nor a past to consult."

Apart from Hitler's apparent atheism, the kaiser's chief beef with the Nazi leader seems to be he'd displaced him as the de facto king.

However, when Germany invaded Holland in 1940 and Wilhelm became a citizen in Hitler's Third Reich, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill offered the royal asylum in the UK, which Wilhelm turned down.

When France fell a few weeks later, he was among the first to congratulate the Führer, despite his grandson Prince Wilhelm being killed during the invasion of Poland fighting as one of Hitler's soldiers.

Incredibly, the young prince's funeral attracted 50,000 mourners – the largest non-state-sanctioned assembly Germany witnessed while under Nazi rule. The gathering demonstrated such lingering support for the monarchy that the Prinzenlass – or Prince's Decree – was passed. It spared all members of the German royal houses from service in the military and therefore potential martyrdom. Kaiser Bill may have been marginalised, but to Hitler he still clearly posed a threat.

Life in exile wasn't too cruel to the powerless monarch

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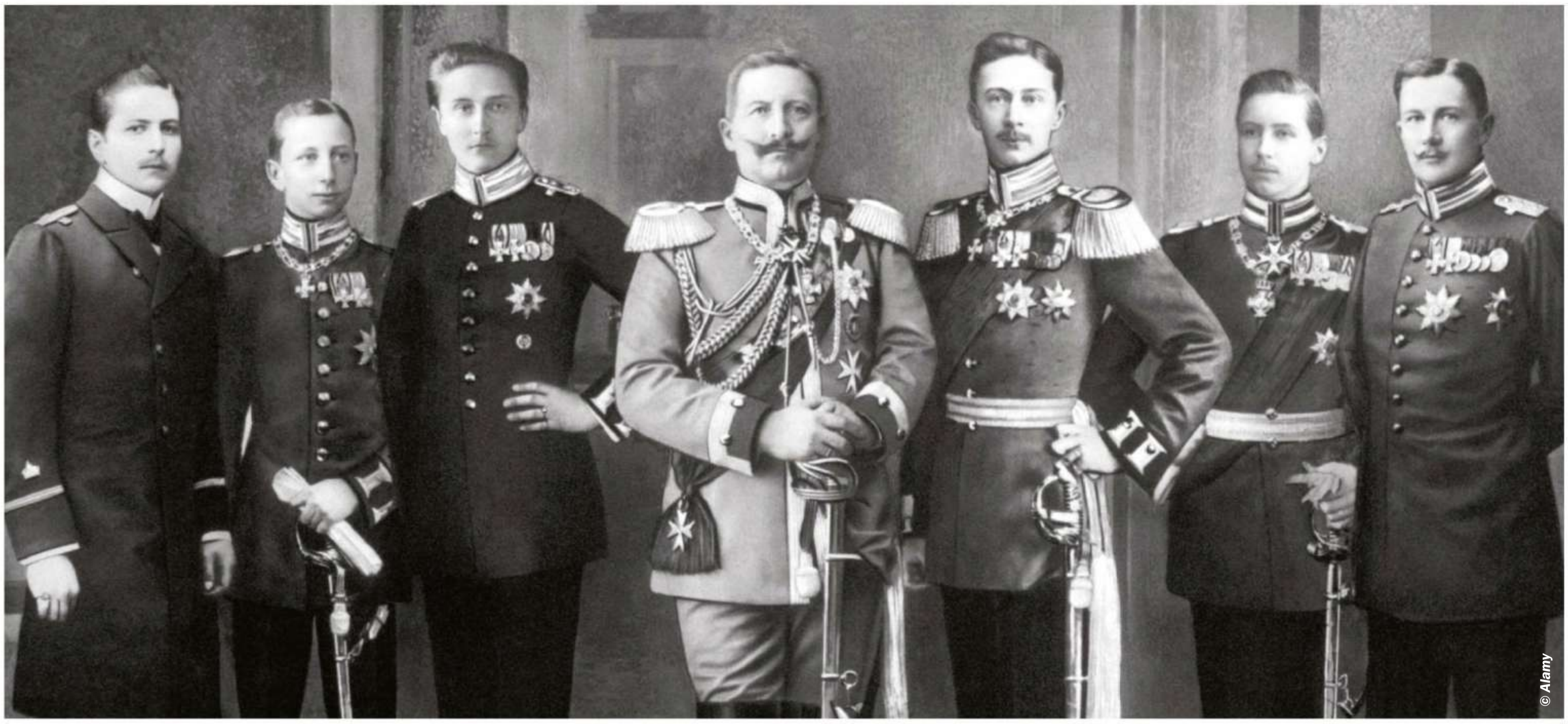
THE LAST PRINCES

What became of Kaiser Wilhelm's six sons?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PRINCE ADALBERT

1884-1948

Dropping off the radar with the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party, Wilhelm's third son Adalbert moved to Switzerland with his wife and two children during the 1930s and lived out the rest of his life there in exile.

PRINCE JOACHIM

1890-1920

The sixth and youngest son Joachim committed suicide in 1920. He was diagnosed in 1918 with the rare hereditary condition of porphyria and was prone to outbursts of rage, which cost him his wife and then his life.

PRINCE AUGUST WILHELM

1887-1949

'Auwi' joined the Nazi Party, gaining a rank in the paramilitary Brownshirts and then the SS. He was sidelined in 1942 for making derogatory remarks about Joseph Goebbels.

CROWN PRINCE FRIEDRICH WILHELM

1882-1951

Friedrich Wilhelm was approached by opposition leaders in Germany intent on replacing Hitler as a head of state. The crown prince turned them down, and was put under house arrest in July 1944.

PRINCE OSKAR

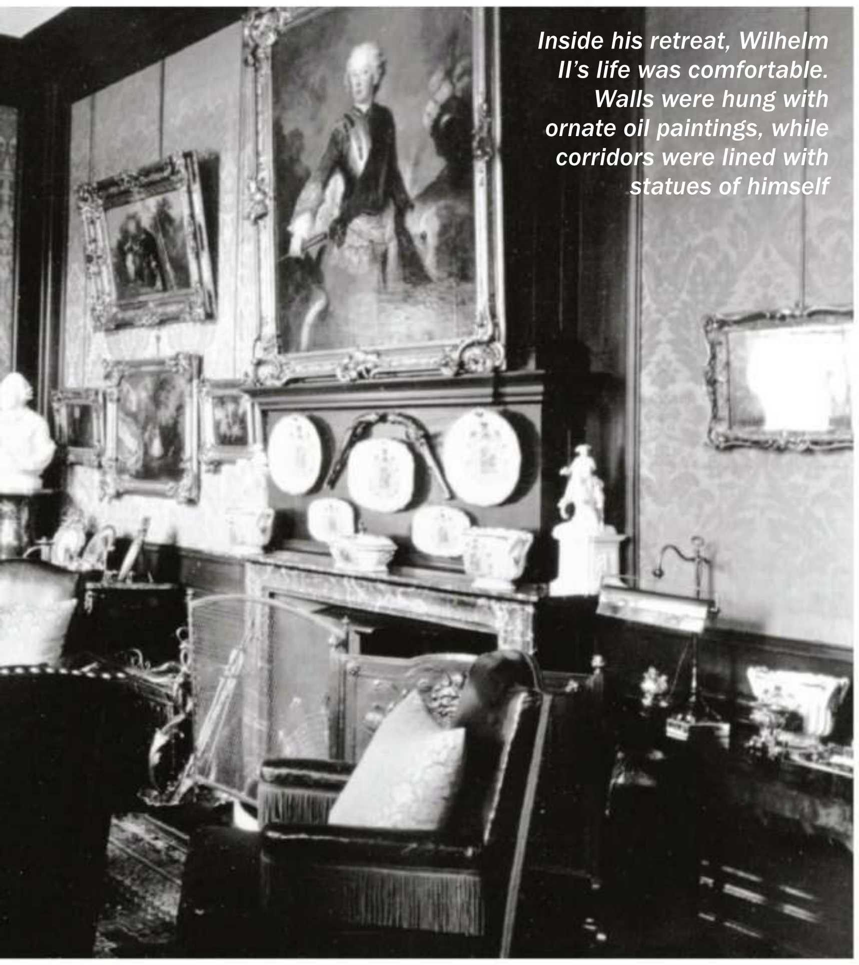
1888-1958

Fifth son Oskar was feted as a hero in World War I and accused of war crimes in its aftermath. A member of Stahlhelm, Oskar was active in courting Hitler and held a commission in the Wehrmacht.

PRINCE EITEL FRIEDRICH

1883-1942

Having served in World War I, Eitel Friedrich became an active member of the Stahlhelm. Although later swearing allegiance to Hitler, he was unimpressed with the Führer.



Inside his retreat, Wilhelm II's life was comfortable. Walls were hung with ornate oil paintings, while corridors were lined with statues of himself

Since boyhood he'd enjoyed outdoor pursuits, and he now filled his largely meaningless days either shooting or keeping fit by splitting logs into stacks of firewood – more than could ever reasonably be used. Thousands of the estate's trees were chopped down as a result, leading one employee to quip, "It looks like the kaiser wants to re-create another devastated battlefield around Huis Doorn." Others, meanwhile, began calling him the Woodchopper of Doorn behind his back.

In many ways, the estate was little more than a high-end prison. Barbed wire surrounded the property and Dutch soldiers guarded the gates. Although this was all intended for the kaiser's protection, a sense of incarceration could not have been lost on him – nor on the thousands of visitors who came to the property over the years, hoping to catch a glimpse of him as if he were a rare animal in a zoo.

Not that Wilhelm felt he had done anything to deserve such a miserable fate. His insecurities and personal ambition had plunged the whole world into war, and yet he remained unable to recognise that he was in any way accountable. Although he was Queen Victoria's grandson, Wilhelm had been brought up to regard Britain with suspicion and had developed an adolescent obsession about rivalling the power of its royal house. It was an obsession he'd never grow out of, and at the start of the 20th century he had began to build a huge war machine, in particular a huge navy that could match Britain's. It was a clear threat that Britain took seriously, and as Wilhelm continued this escalation of arms the three great powers of Europe – Britain, France and Russia – bound themselves together with treaties that effectively allied themselves against Germany. Because of this, when war inevitably began Germany found itself surrounded. It was at this point that Wilhelm relinquished responsibility for the chaos he'd created. Taking a step back, he handed over the running of his unwinnable war to his generals while he watched the escalating slaughter from the safety of his palace walls.

Yet both his memoirs that appeared in 1922 and later interviews revealed he was utterly unrepentant about the past. "I absolutely believe in the future of my country," he declared during a radio broadcast in 1931. "A nation that fights during four-and-a-half years against the whole world, and if America hadn't come in, would have beaten the Allies, will always in the end come out top."

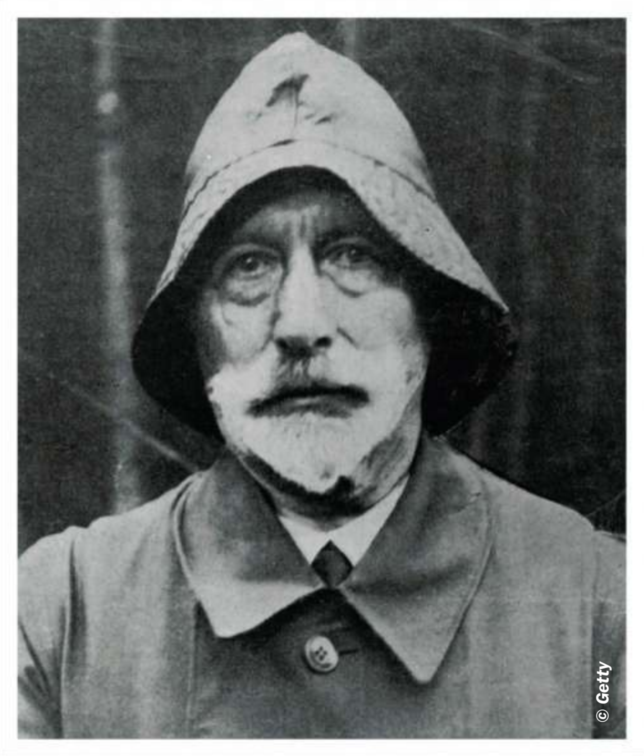
At this point, of course, Wilhelm was still angling to be restored to the throne, and although he couldn't have known it, the future of Germany was in reality heading towards a darker horizon than anyone could have dared to predict. Two years after he gave this interview, Adolf Hitler – an Austrian who'd served as a lowly corporal in the kaiser's army – replaced him as absolute ruler of Germany, and he was planning a conflict that would overshadow even Wilhelm's warped ambitions.

By the end of the decade, the German army was once again on the march, and in 1940 Hitler's forces managed to do in a matter of weeks what the kaiser's army had failed to do in four-and-a-half years: France was defeated and British troops chased out of Europe. Wilhelm immediately sent Hitler a telegram congratulating him, and later wrote to his pet historian Kurt Jagow telling him, "I was deeply moved by the incomparable achievements of the German Wehrmacht… I followed the development of operations in minute detail with the aid of maps. Under brilliant leadership all sections of the armed forces displayed the greatest courage to achieve deeds that were quite stunning. The ignominy of November 1918 has been wiped out and the Diktat of Versailles torn up!"

Wilhelm clearly felt vindicated, and even partly took credit for what Hitler had achieved. After all, these stunning victories had been won with what was to all intents and purposes the army he'd built, and in places still commanded by generals he'd appointed.

When Kaiser Bill died on 4 June the following year aged 82, World War II was very much still going Germany's way. Britain was on the verge of defeat, the Americans looked like they had no interest in getting involved in a European conflict again, and Hitler's ultimately disastrous invasion of the Soviet Union was still more than two weeks away. The old king doubtless went to his grave believing that his dream of toppling the British Empire and replacing it with a world-dominating German one was finally coming true. His place in history was assured. In the event, however, it was not to be in the way he'd envisaged.

Within four years Germany's war machine had again been defeated – smashed, like the country's cities, economy and infrastructure, in the most violent conflagration the world had ever seen. Yes, WWII had been Hitler's war, but Wilhelm, who'd seemingly spent the last 21 years of his life sidelined by history, had been the man who'd lit its touch paper so many years before.



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Above: The kaiser, shown here around 1920, filled his days with outdoor pursuits such as chopping wood

Below: Old and powerless, the last kaiser of Germany takes tea in the orangerie with Hermine, his second wife

© Getty

FURTHER READING

- JCG Röhl, *Kaiser Wilhelm: A Concise Life*, Cambridge University Press 2014
- SR A'Barrow, *Death Of A Nation: A New History Of Germany*, Book Guild Publishing 2015
- C Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise And Downfall Of Prussia 1600-1947*, Penguin 2007
- I Kershaw, *To Hell And Back: Europe 1914-1949*, Allen Lane, 2015

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Heroes of the Medal of Honor

LEWIS MILLETT

This captain led the last bayonet charge in US military history, with two platoons, to take a strongly held enemy position near Soam-Ni, Korea

WORDS: **MURRAY DAHM**

The UN forces in Korea endured a disastrous start to 1951. On 31 December 1950 the Chinese 13th Army breached UN defences below the 38th parallel as part of the Third Phase Campaign and, on 3 January, Seoul was evacuated by the US Eighth Army. The Eighth Army was commanded by Lieutenant General Matthew B Ridgeway, who had been in office for little over a week, taking up his command only on 26 December 1950. One of the regiments in the Eighth Army was the 27th Infantry Regiment, the Wolfhounds (a name given to them by their Bolshevik enemies in Siberia when they served there during the Russian Civil War in 1918-19). Commanding Company E, Easy Company, of the 2nd Battalion was 30-year-old Captain Lewis Millett, a veteran of several theatres in WWII whose red handlebar moustache had led, unsurprisingly, to the nickname Red, although men who knew him called him Lou.

Less than three weeks after evacuating Seoul, Ridgeway, determined to improve morale, organised a reconnaissance in force. Operation Wolfhound was to be led by I Corps and spearheaded by the 25th Infantry Division. The central force of this operation was the 27th Infantry Regiment, after whom the operation was named. The operation pushed north, with artillery and air support back towards Seoul. It was an immense success, establishing a new front line. A new offensive, Operation Thunderbolt, was then launched on 25 January, and I Corps advanced towards Suwon, 19 miles (30km) south of Seoul, taking it from the communist forces in one day. By 31 January the front line had advanced north of Suwon, and on 4 February a general advance was ordered towards the south bank of the Han River, prioritising the taking of Inchon and Kimpo Airfield. The enemy maintained resistance, delaying the advance with minefields and destroyed bridges, but seemed to be preparing for a major offensive on 8 February (after the Chinese New Year and perhaps on the birthday of the Korean People's Army).

© Alamy

The strongest enemy positions were placed directly in the way of I Corps' advance, centred on Kwanak Mountain, the last defensible heights before reaching Seoul. These positions were held in strength by the North Korean 47th Division and towards them marched the men of the 27th Infantry Regiment.

The Division left Suwon on 3 February and marched 16 miles (26km) to a point near Anyang. From that vicinity, the Division proceeded to operate a series of patrol actions between 4-10 February. Several of these patrols were intended to attack smaller enemy strongholds during daylight hours. On 7 February, 1951, Millett's company was involved in just such a patrol. Captain Millett was personally leading the 100 men of Easy Company in an attack on enemies positioned on Hill 180, near Soam-Ni. The approach was from a smaller line of hills, and as he advanced he noticed that 1st Platoon was pinned down by machine-gun and anti-tank fire. These were

***Left:** Retired Colonel Lewis L Millet wears his Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star and other medals earned in World War II, Korea and Vietnam*

One of Colonel Millett's several visits to Osan Air Base (in 1985). The identification of the hill within the base as Hill 180 of Millett's action has confused its actual location

> "CAPTAIN MILLETT ORDERED THE 3D PLATOON FORWARD, PLACED HIMSELF AT THE HEAD OF THE TWO PLATOONS, AND, WITH FIXED BAYONET, LED THE ASSAULT UP THE FIRE-SWEPT HILL"
>
> **Medal of Honor citation**

Source: Wiki / PD /Gov

Russian 14.5mm PTRD-1941 anti-tank rifles, known as 'buffalo guns', used for long–range sniping as well as taking out vehicles. Each North Korean Division was equipped with 36 of these old but deadly weapons. Gathering the men of 3rd Platoon, Millett went to the support of his 1st Platoon.

Millett later recalled that he fixed his own bayonet and then ordered his men to "fix bayonets and follow me". The men charged up the hill, encouraged by Millett shouting: "Grenades and cold steel!" As they approached the position, Millett saw the 14.5mm anti-tank nest and charged it himself, killing the three-man gun crew with his bayonet. (His citation would claim he killed two men). Millet then waved his men forward from the top of the hill and they continued the attack with grenades and bayonets. Pictures of Millett at the time (and in the life-size diorama of his action at the National Infantry Museum, Fort Benning, Georgia) show him with grenades attached to his harness. Once the North Korean commander was killed, the remainder of the enemy, perhaps 200 men, broke and fled.

The communist forces suffered 18 dead to the bayonets of Millett's company, which suffered nine dead in the daring attack. Another version claims that 50 enemy were killed, 20 by bayonet.

Millett would later claim that he had already led bayonet charges to take similar enemy strong points in patrols on the 4th and 5th of February, but his may have been part of General Ridgeway's plan to re-instil morale. Of the action, Millett later claimed that: "The Chinese had put out the word that we were afraid of bayonets. 'Americans afraid of bayonets is just ridiculous,' I thought, so I intended to prove a point." Another version of this recollection is more colourful, with Millet telling another interviewer: "We had acquired some Chinese documents [propaganda leaflets] stating that Americans were afraid of hand-to-hand fighting and cold steel. When I read that I thought, 'I'll show you, you sons of bitches!'" Millett also claimed that the reason for his unit's success in their charge on the enemy was that it was a composite unit, made up of men from diverse ethnic backgrounds. "I had a composite unit, from every national group in the United States. We had black, white and brown – I'd say typically American – and typically American, they took the objective, and typically American they were very proud after it."

Immediately after the enemy fled from Hill 180, Millett was wounded by grenade fragments in his shin, but he refused to be evacuated until the objective was secured. One version of events claimed Millett was wounded before he even charged.

Historian of the US Army, SLA Marshall, called Millett's charge "the most complete bayonet charge by American troops since Cold Harbor", recalling the June 1864 battle in Virginia during the US Civil War. Marshall was present the day after Millett's charge and would write the recommendation for his Medal of Honor. (Marshall called the location Anyang-ni).

It would not be long before Millett received his medal, with President Harry S Truman presenting it to him in July 1951. It was the pinnacle of a remarkable and unique military career (and one which continued until 1973). In all, Millett served for 35 years in the military.

> "IN THE FIERCE CHARGE CAPT. MILLETT BAYONETED TWO ENEMY SOLDIERS AND BOLDLY CONTINUED ON, THROWING GRENADES, CLUBBING AND BAYONETING THE ENEMY, WHILE URGING HIS MEN FORWARD BY SHOUTING ENCOURAGEMENT"
>
> **Medal of Honor citation**

Men of the 27th Infantry Regiment take cover close to the communist front line, August 1952

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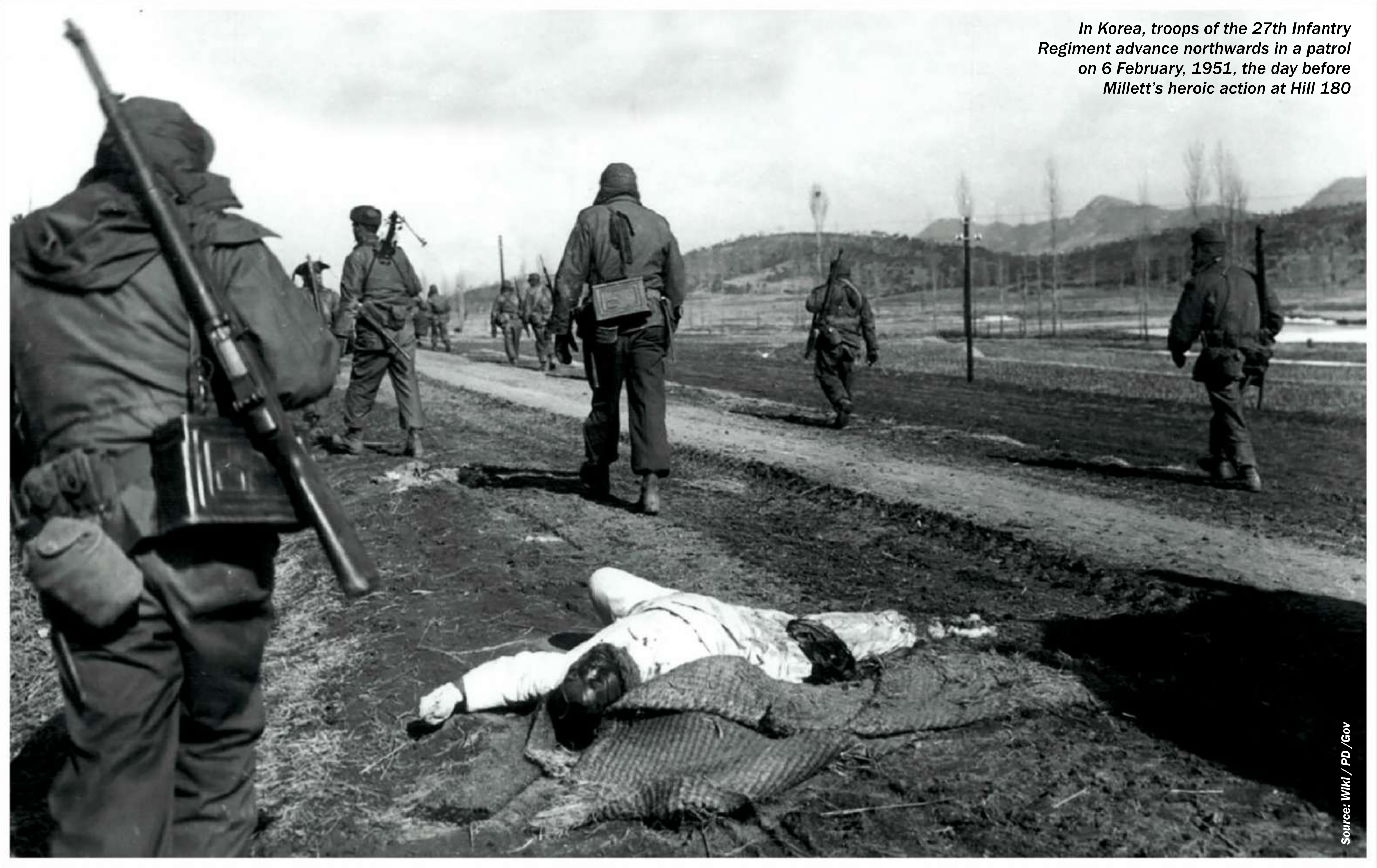


In Korea, troops of the 27th Infantry Regiment advance northwards in a patrol on 6 February, 1951, the day before Millett's heroic action at Hill 180

Source: Wiki / PD /Gov

He enlisted in the Massachusetts National Guard when he was only 17, possibly as part of the 101st Artillery Regiment in which his uncle had served in WWI. He then joined the Army Air Corps in 1940. When President Roosevelt announced that no American would fight on foreign soil in a speech that September, however, Millett deserted and travelled to Canada to enlist in the Canadian Army. In early 1941 he travelled to London as part of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, serving as a gunner (some accounts say radar operator) during the latter stages of the Blitz.

When the USA entered the war, he went to the US Embassy and asked to be transferred to the US Army, joining the 27th Armored Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Armored Division, in 1942. He was involved in Operation Torch in Tunisia and was awarded the Silver Star after jumping into a burning ammunition-filled half-track and driving it away from Allied soldiers before jumping clear just before it exploded. Soon after that he shot down a Messerschmitt Me-109, firing a machine gun mounted on a half-track and shooting the pilot through the cockpit. Millett then joined the invasion of Italy at Salerno and then Anzio as a sergeant. In Italy, his desertion was uncovered and he was court-martialled and fined $52; in the field he was soon promoted again and awarded a Bronze Star. He spent six months in North Africa and six months in Italy.

After his service in Korea, Millett graduated Ranger School at Fort Benning. He served with the 101st Airborne Division in the Vietnam War as an intelligence officer and was involved as an adviser in the Phoenix Program, the controversial operation to identify Viet Cong sympathisers. He later went on to command a reconnaissance commando school to train small teams for covert actions in Vietnam at the Army Security Agency at Fort Devens. Millett retired in 1973 having achieved the rank of colonel. In all he was awarded the Medal of Honor, Silver Star, Distinguished Service Cross, two Legions of Merit, three Bronze Stars, four Purple Hearts and three Air Medals.

Every year on the anniversary of 'the Battle of Bayonet Hill' a commemoration is held by troops stationed at Osan Air Base in South Korea. It's one of the base's major annual events. Millett himself visited the base and joined in the commemorations on several occasions, beginning in 1975. A plaque within the base claims that the battle took place within the grounds of the airbase, but the site of the battle was actually some distance north of the base. The reasons for claiming the battle in such a way are understandable, as is the esprit de corps the association encourages. Unfortunately, the original Medal of Honor record contained an error in its map reference number, allowing for confusion to creep in.

What this mislocation also meant, however, was that the actual location of the battle was lost. That is, until 2018 when it was placed once more in its correct location by retired US Air Force colonel David Murphy (although others argue for alternative locations). Murphy's investigations were not helped by the fact that Millett, on his visits to Osan, stated that the 'Hill 180' within the Air Base was the site of his action and he would point out on his visits where parts of his action occurred on the hill within the base. For this reason, Osan personnel have been unwilling to accept the revised location of the battle even though it accords with official maps of the operation (which began north of the position of Osan, which itself is south of Suwon, where the 25th Infantry Division was on 3 February).

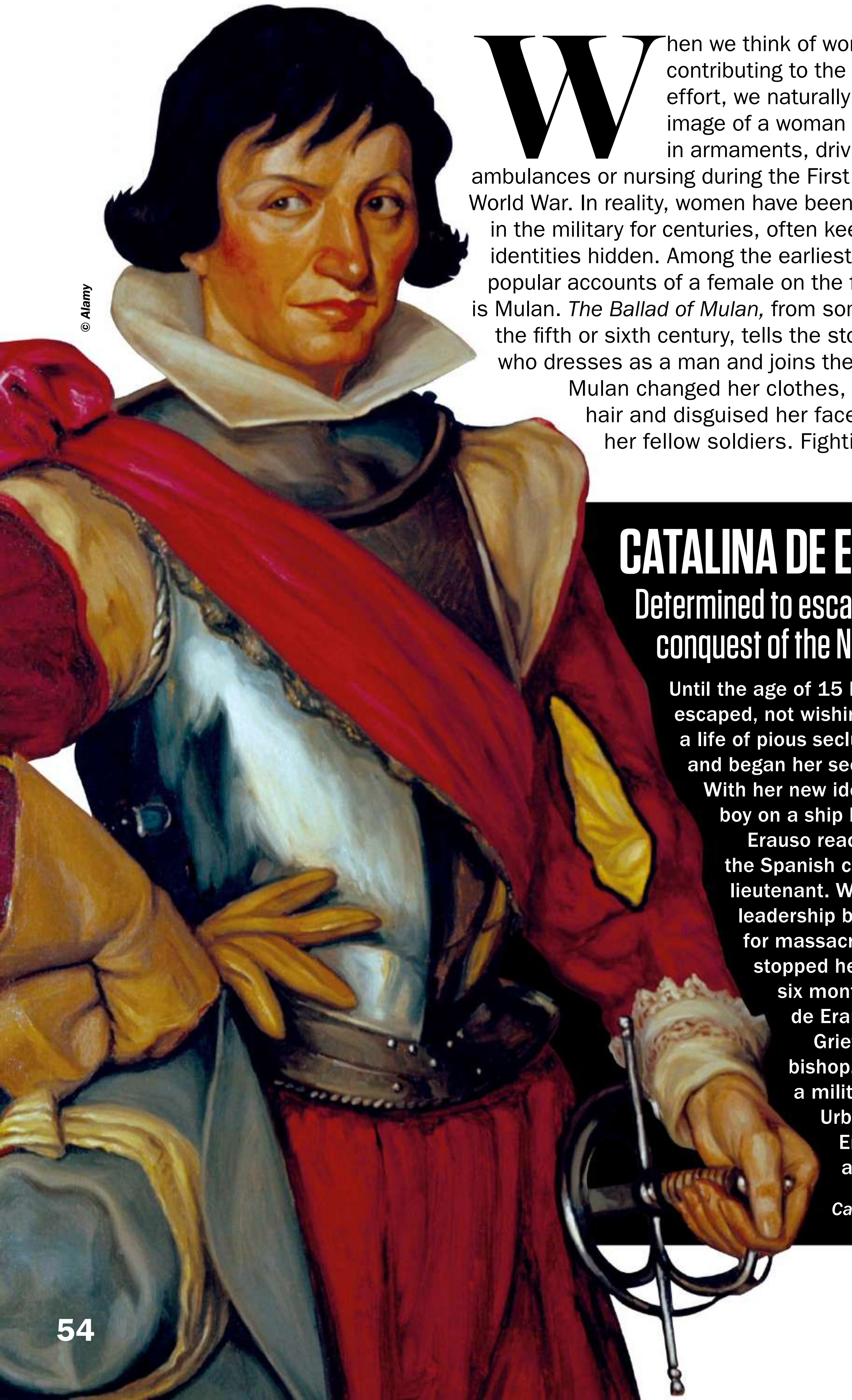
We don't know if Millett misremembered the location of the engagement – his first visit to Osan occurred in 1975 and it had been 24 years since the battle. It's possible that the hill there looked similar to the actual Hill 180 some 25 miles (40km) further north. Murphy speculated that Millett was taken to the wrong hill by his hosts and did not question them or the location. Millett's recollections across several visits then cemented the tradition that the hill within Osan was the site of the battle. That provided the personnel of the base all the proof they needed that the base contained the location of the battle and that this tradition should not be questioned. Millett himself may have realised his mistake – in a 1993 interview he stated that the battle took place "north of Osan" and in 1994 claimed to not remember the hill at all. Debate over the exact location of the battle should not, however, distract from the outstanding bravery of Millett's action. His death in 2009 has meant arguments continue.

Millett's reflection on his lengthy service provides a better epitaph than debate on the location of the battle: "I believe in freedom, I believe deeply in it. I've fought in three wars, and volunteered for all of them, because I believed as a free man that it was my duty to help those under the attack of tyranny. Just as simple as that."

Five Secret Female Soldiers

WORDS **OLIVIA SMITH**

Across the centuries women's role in warfare has been questioned, downplayed and even erased from history. Nonetheless, for as long as there has been war, women have served on the frontline, often being forced to use clever and elusive means to hide their gender


© Alamy

When we think of women contributing to the war effort, we naturally have an image of a woman working in armaments, driving ambulances or nursing during the First or Second World War. In reality, women have been serving in the military for centuries, often keeping their identities hidden. Among the earliest and most popular accounts of a female on the frontline is Mulan. *The Ballad of Mulan,* from some time in the fifth or sixth century, tells the story of a girl who dresses as a man and joins the army. Mulan changed her clothes, cut her hair and disguised her face, fooling her fellow soldiers. Fighting side-by-side for years, they were not aware Mulan was a woman. After years of military campaigns and service to her country, she returned home an accomplished warrior. Though the reality behind her legend is debated, what's true is that women have been disguising themselves as men for centuries. Here, we look at five women who passed themselves off as men to wage war. Each was on a mission, be it for adventure, discovery or survival, and in doing so they proved gender was never an obstacle to service.

What connects all of these women is the only way they could fulfil their mission was by disguising their true identity. Courage, endurance, strength, determination and bravery – attributes easily associated with men in the military – are attributes equally demonstrated by these women in their military campaigns.

CATALINA DE ERAUSO 1592 – 1650

Determined to escape a destiny of ecclesiastical servitude, the bloodthirsty conquest of the New World beckoned instead

Until the age of 15 Erauso was restricted within the confines of a Spanish convent. She escaped, not wishing to conform to the paths set out for women in Early Modern Spain: either a life of pious seclusion as a nun, or domesticity. Erauso cut her hair, changed her clothes and began her second life, adopting male names such as Francisco, Pedro and Antonio. With her new identity, she headed across the Atlantic Ocean to the New World as a cabin boy on a ship helmed by Captain Miguel de Echezarreta.

Erauso reached South America and served as a soldier in Peru and Chile during the Spanish conquest of the Araucanian Indians, even achieving the rank of second lieutenant. When her captain died during the Battle of Purén, Erauso proved her leadership by taking control and winning the battle. However, she became notorious for massacring Indians, burning crops and even assassinating a chief. That cruelty stopped her from becoming captain and even led to imprisonment in a church for six months. Upon release, she entered into a duel with her own brother, Don Miguel de Erauso, a secretary governor, whom she killed.

Grief-stricken, she entered a convent in Lima, confessing her gender to a bishop. This confession made her somewhat of a celebrity, and she was given a military pension by Philip IV. In 1626 she was given dispensation by Pope Urban VIII to live the remainder of her life dressed as a man. Commenting on Erauso's escapades, Captain Francisco Perez de Navarrete of the Spanish army said: "She was taken as a man because she always showed courage."

Catalina De Erauso was also known as La Monja Alférez (The Ensign Nun)

CHRISTIAN DAVIES 1667 – 1739

Distraught at the disappearance of her husband, Davies put on a uniform and literally walked through gunfire to find him

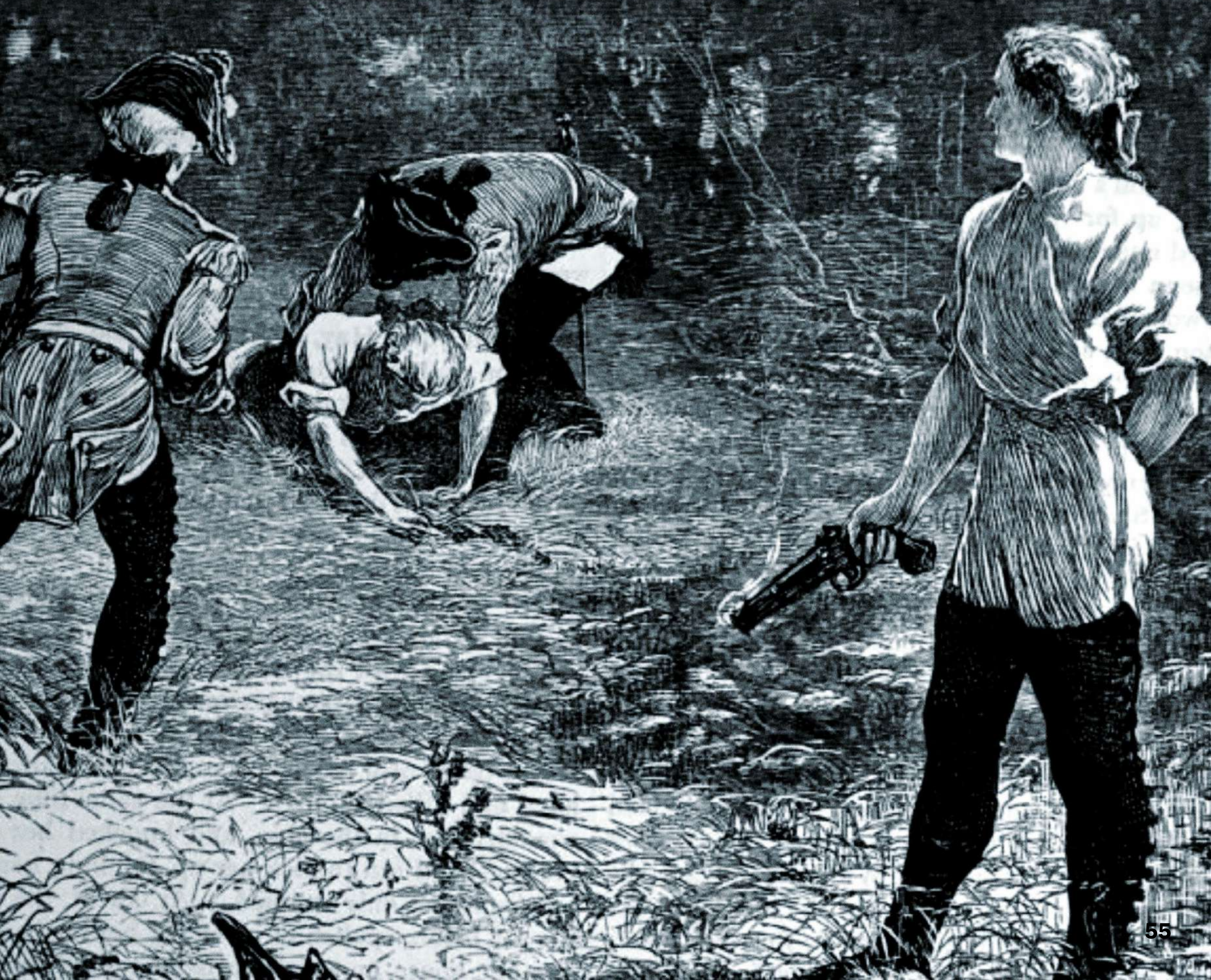
During the Nine Years' War and Wars of the Spanish Succession, Christian Davies earnt battle honours across several campaigns, all while trying to find her missing husband. Davies' exploits were even chronicled in a book by Daniel Defoe, *The Life And Adventures Of Mrs Christlan Davies*, published in 1740.

It is said Davies' husband Richard had been tricked into joining the British Army and was shipped to Flanders to serve in the war. Enraged, Davies decided to disguise herself as a man and set out to find him – soon she was on a ship bound for the Netherlands.

Davies first saw action at the Battle of Landen (1693), one of the bloodiest engagements of the Nine Years' War, where she suffered a leg injury and was captured by the French. After being released (without her true identity being discovered) Davies was cared for by a local woman, but in a bid to protect her from a sergeant, Davies ended up in a duel – which she won. She was discharged from the army but re-enlisted in the North Royal British Dragoons in 1697 and fought with them until the Peace of Ryswick, which ended the Nine Years' War.

Upon the renewal of hostilities in 1701, Davies once again re-enlisted in the army, taking part in the Battle of Blenheim (1704). It was here that she found her husband among French prisoners, but he was now in a relationship with a Dutch woman. Davies refused to take him back, but the couple fought together as 'brothers' until Davies fractured her skull at the Battle of Ramillies (1706). When a surgeon treating her discovered her true identity, she was discharged and returned to life as a woman. In recognition of her bravery, she was given a full military pension and was even honoured by Queen Anne as a Chelsea Pensioner.

"DAVIES REFUSED TO TAKE HER HUSBAND BACK, BUT THEY NONETHELESS FOUGHT TOGETHER AS 'BROTHERS' UNTIL DAVIES FRACTURED HER SKULL AT THE BATTLE OF RAMILLIES"



Davies disguised herself as a man to fight in the British Army, at one point even winning a duel

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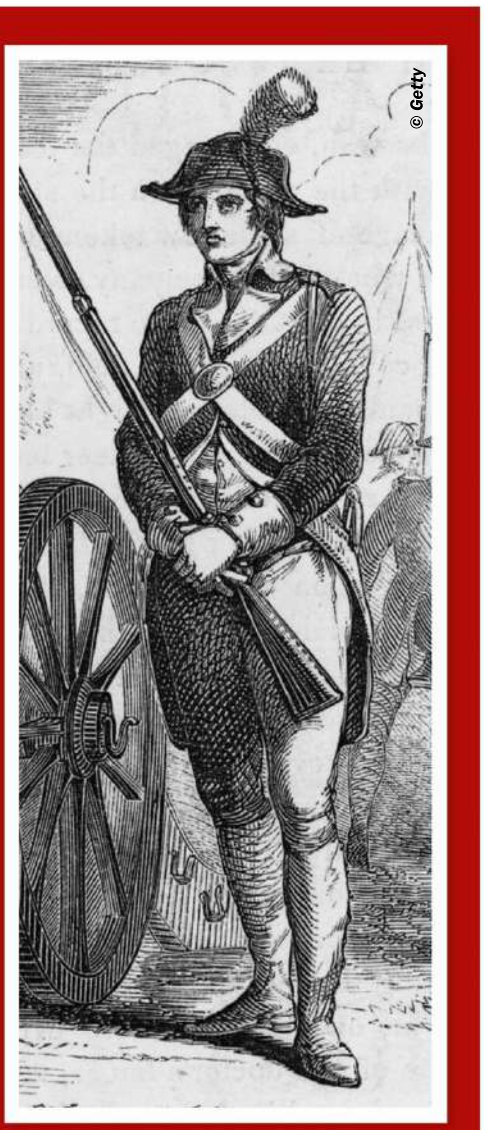
DEBORAH SAMPSON 1760-1827

Casting off her humble origins, Sampson disguised herself as a man to fight in the American Revolution

A Massachusetts native, Sampson came from a poor family and was destined for a life in service. But this wasn't to be her fate. In the early 1780s she made her first attempt to enlist in the army. She was rebuffed, but in 1782 her second attempt was a success. Under the alias Robert Shurtliff, she joined the 4th Massachusetts Regiment under Captain George Webb during the Revolutionary War. Sampson spent 18 months as a combat soldier, participating in several skirmishes and sustaining multiple injuries. During the conflict she became an accomplished soldier, scouting for neutral territory, leading expeditions, conducting house raids and storming British redoubts. She was reportedly hit by musket fire in the summer of 1782 but refused medical treatment in fear of her identity being discovered, and she extracted a bullet herself.

Her identity was finally discovered in 1783 when she contracted a fever while on duty in Philadelphia. Sampson was honourably discharged and returned to Massachusetts, and in around 1802 she began a year-long lecture tour about her experiences. Sampson was the only woman to receive a military pension (albeit minimal) but she had to petition for it. Her cause was taken up by Paul Revere, who noted in 1804 that while he expected her to be a "tall, masculine female" she was in fact a "small, effeminate, and conversable woman."


© Getty

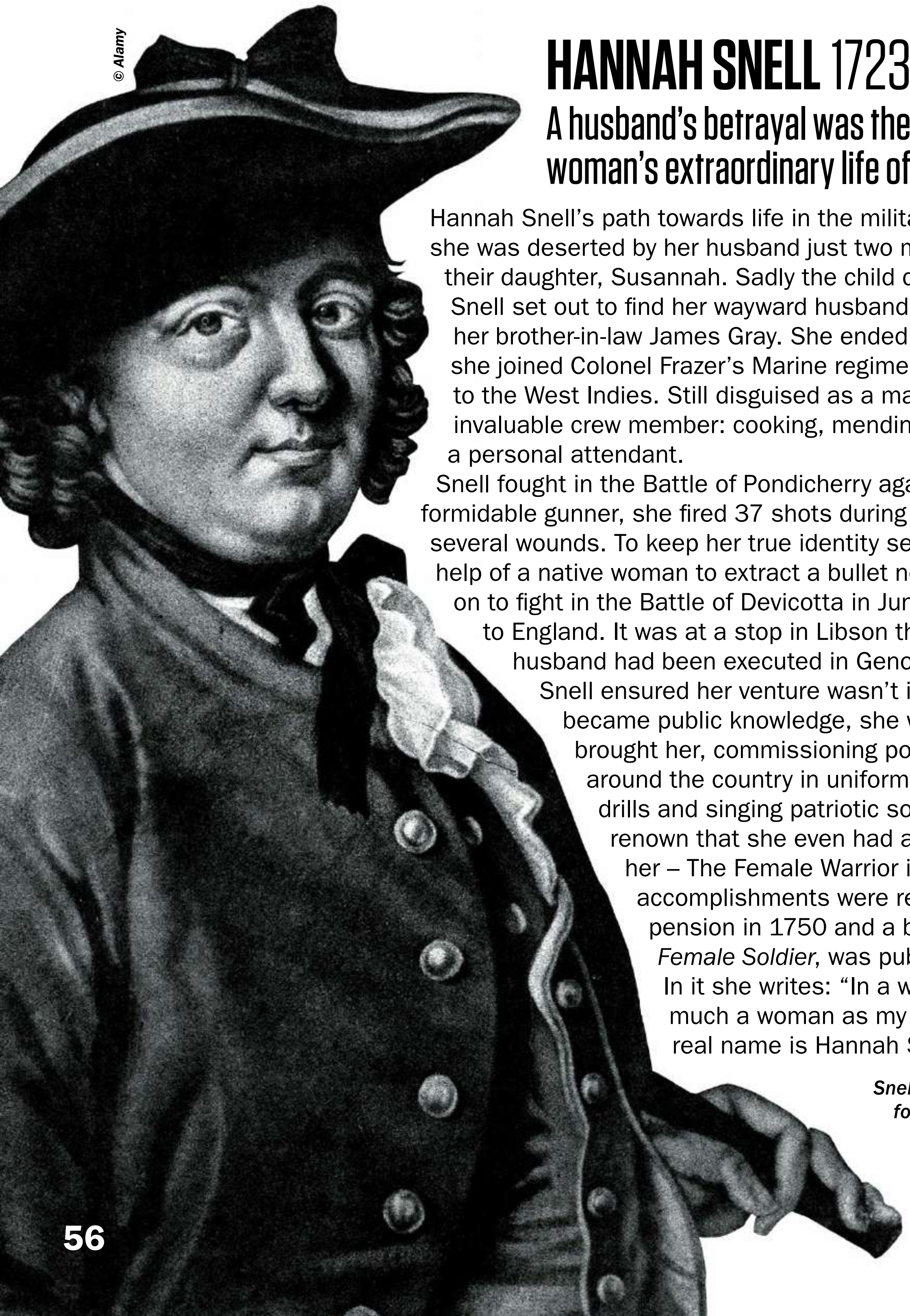
Sampson refused treatment for a wound for fear her identity would be discovered

HANNAH SNELL 1723-92

A husband's betrayal was the catalyst for this woman's extraordinary life of adventure

Hannah Snell's path towards life in the military began in 1746 when she was deserted by her husband just two months before the birth of their daughter, Susannah. Sadly the child died just months later, and Snell set out to find her wayward husband, assuming the identity of her brother-in-law James Gray. She ended up in Portsmouth, where she joined Colonel Frazer's Marine regiment in 1747 and headed out to the West Indies. Still disguised as a man, she proved to be an invaluable crew member: cooking, mending clothes and acting as a personal attendant.

Snell fought in the Battle of Pondicherry against the French – a formidable gunner, she fired 37 shots during the battle but suffered several wounds. To keep her true identity secret, she sought the help of a native woman to extract a bullet near her groin. She went on to fight in the Battle of Devicotta in June 1749, before returning to England. It was at a stop in Libson that she discovered her husband had been executed in Genoa. Once back in England, Snell ensured her venture wasn't in vain. Once her gender became public knowledge, she welcomed the fame it brought her, commissioning portraits and travelling around the country in uniform, demonstrating military drills and singing patriotic songs. Such was Snell's renown that she even had a pub named after her – The Female Warrior in Wapping, London. Her accomplishments were rewarded with a military pension in 1750 and a book telling her story, *The Female Soldier*, was published in the same year. In it she writes: "In a word, gentlemen, I am as much a woman as my mother ever was, and my real name is Hannah Snell."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Snell disguised herself as a man and fought in the West Indies. She was treated as a hero in England

CATHAY WILLIAMS

1844-93

Williams is renowned as the first black woman to serve in the US Army

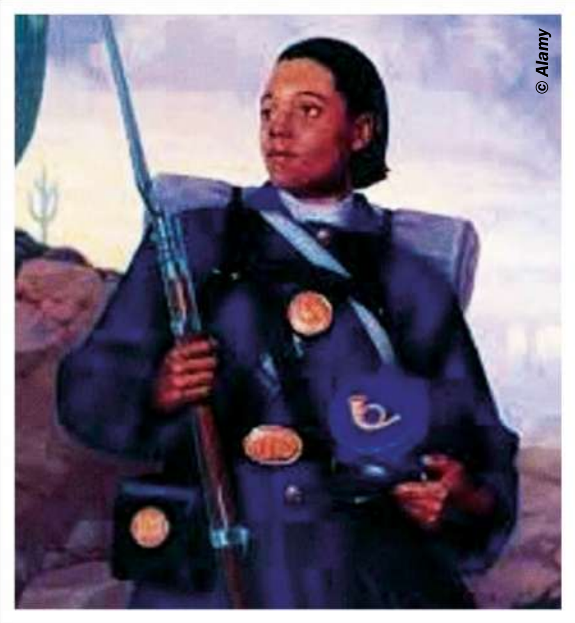
In 1866 Cathay Williams enlisted in the US Army under the name of 'William Cathay'. At the time it was illegal for a woman to serve in the military, and had her gender been discovered, she would have been arrested.

Williams had been born into slavery and was freed shortly after the outbreak of the Civil War by Union soldiers. To earn a living, she worked for the Federal Army as a paid servant. Experiencing military life first-hand, she served General Philip Sheridan, witnessing the Shenandoah Valley raids in Virginia and travelling through Iowa, St Louis, New Orleans and Georgia with Sheridan.

When the Civil War ended Williams wanted to maintain her independence, leading to her 1866 enlistment in the 28th US Infantry Regiment, Company A – one of four all-Black units formed that year. The US Army was an attractive destination for newly freed slaves, offering them a paycheck, regular meals and medical care. However, the army gave Black soldiers inadequate supplies and the soldiers suffered racism from civilians and white soldiers alike.

Williams served with her company across the western frontier, but the harsh conditions took their toll. She suffered from smallpox shortly after her enlistment and was frequently in hospital during nearly three years of brutal military service. In 1868 she was she honourably discharged from the military after her gender was finally discovered by an army surgeon.

In an interview published in the *St Louis Daily Times* on 2 January, 1876, Williams described how she performed her duties just like any other solider: "I carried my musket and did guard and other duties while in the Army." She also boasted of having never been put in the guardhouse (military prison). There is no record that she ever saw direct combat while she was enlisted, but Williams' left a lasting legacy in being the first African American woman to serve in the US Army.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After her true identity was discovered, Williams was honourably discharged from the US Army

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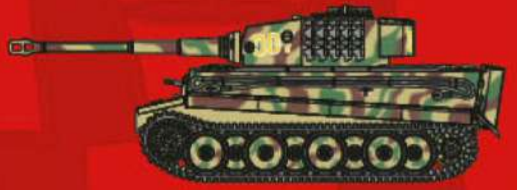
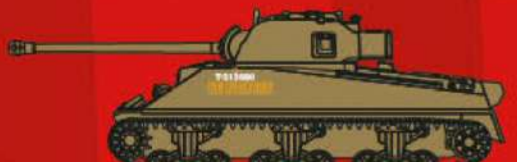
The mighty clash of armour which followed the successful Allied landings on the D-Day beaches of Normandy held the potential to determine the outcome of the war. This time, the dominance of the feared Tiger 1 would be challenged by rocket firing Typhoons from the air and a recently introduced Allied tank on the ground - although appearing outwardly similar to the standard Sherman at first glance, the 17-pounder anti-tank gun mounted on the 'Firefly' was more than capable of knocking out a Tiger. The Germans soon learned to look for the long barrelled Shermans first in any engagement and to make the Firefly a priority target, however, there were so many Shermans in Normandy that misidentification was highly likely and could prove fatal. The days of the mighty Tiger's dominance may have been numbered, but no Allied tank commander would relish the prospect of facing one in combat.

PZKPFW TIGER 1 AUSF E
Commanded by Michael Wittmann, schwere Panzer-Abteilung 101, Normandy, France, 1944.
Length 118mm Width 53mm Pieces 96



SHERMAN FIREFLY VC
Staffordshire Yeomanry, 27th Armoured Brigade, Operation Goodwood, Normandy, France, June 1944.
Length 110mm Width 37mm Pieces 88



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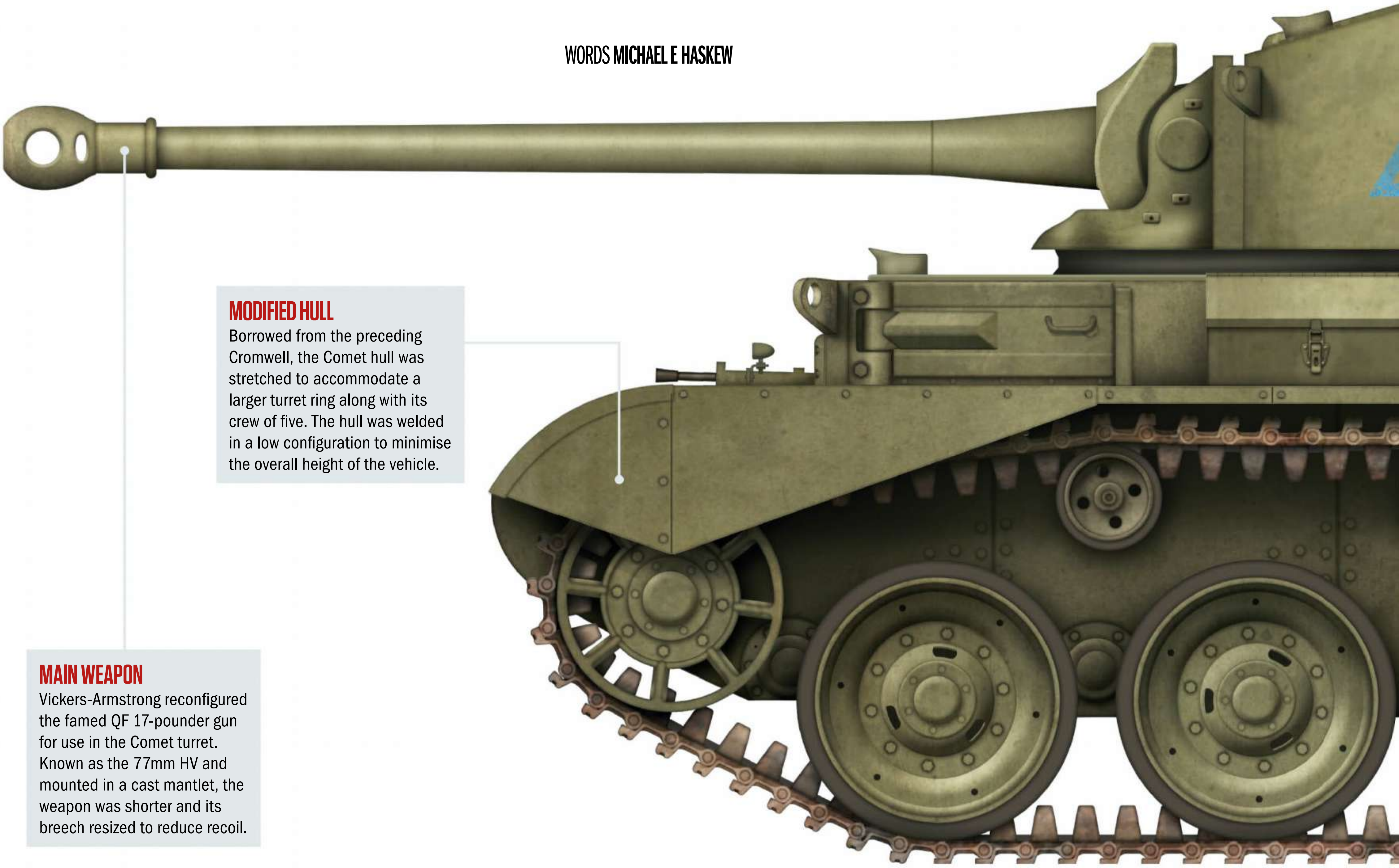
COMET A34

Perhaps the best British-built tank of World War II, the Comet marked a transition in armoured vehicle doctrine

WORDS **MICHAEL E HASKEW**



MODIFIED HULL
Borrowed from the preceding Cromwell, the Comet hull was stretched to accommodate a larger turret ring along with its crew of five. The hull was welded in a low configuration to minimise the overall height of the vehicle.

MAIN WEAPON
Vickers-Armstrong reconfigured the famed QF 17-pounder gun for use in the Comet turret. Known as the 77mm HV and mounted in a cast mantlet, the weapon was shorter and its breech resized to reduce recoil.

The cruiser tank Comet A34 occupies a dual position in the history of British armoured fighting vehicles. Early tank doctrine involved two distinct types: the infantry tank and the cruiser tank, with the former envisioned as support for advancing infantry formations and the latter to exploit breakthroughs in enemy defences, rapidly slashing into rear areas and wreaking havoc.

Practical combat experience in the North Africa theatre during World War II revealed the need to modernise both tactics and the vehicles themselves, particularly as the Germans introduced the fearsome PzKpfw V Panther medium and PzKpfw VI Tiger heavy tanks armed with high-velocity 75mm and 88mm guns. For the British military establishment, the most practical means of upgrading tank performance involved increased firepower and the economical use of limited resources. It was therefore decided to utilise as many components as possible of the existing Cromwell cruiser tank, which was in itself quite an improvement over earlier British types.

The Comet did not arrive on the battlefields of Western Europe in significant numbers prior to the end of World War II. However, its development produced the best of the British cruiser tanks of the conflict, combining firepower, speed and armour protection. The Comet also served as a bridge to the future, particularly the concept of the modern main battle tank prevalent during the Cold War years and even today.

Right: *A Comet tank crew of the 11th Armoured Division crosses the Weser River in Germany*

© Getty

COMET CRUISER TANK

COMMISSIONED:	1944
ORIGIN:	GREAT BRITAIN
LENGTH:	7.66 METRES (25.13 FEET)
RANGE:	198 KM (123 MI)
ENGINE:	ROLLS-ROYCE METEOR MARK III V-12 PETROL
CREW:	5
ARMOUR:	14MM-102MM (.55IN-4.02IN)
PRIMARY WEAPON:	1X 77MM HV GUN
SECONDARY WEAPON:	2X 7.92MM BESA MACHINE GUNS

TURRET DESIGN

The electrically rotating Comet turret was constructed of rolled, homogeneous armour plating welded with some protective slope. The earlier Cromwell turret ring was enlarged to accommodate a heavier main weapon. A rectangular storage bin was fixed to the rear, and the commander operated an attached searchlight.

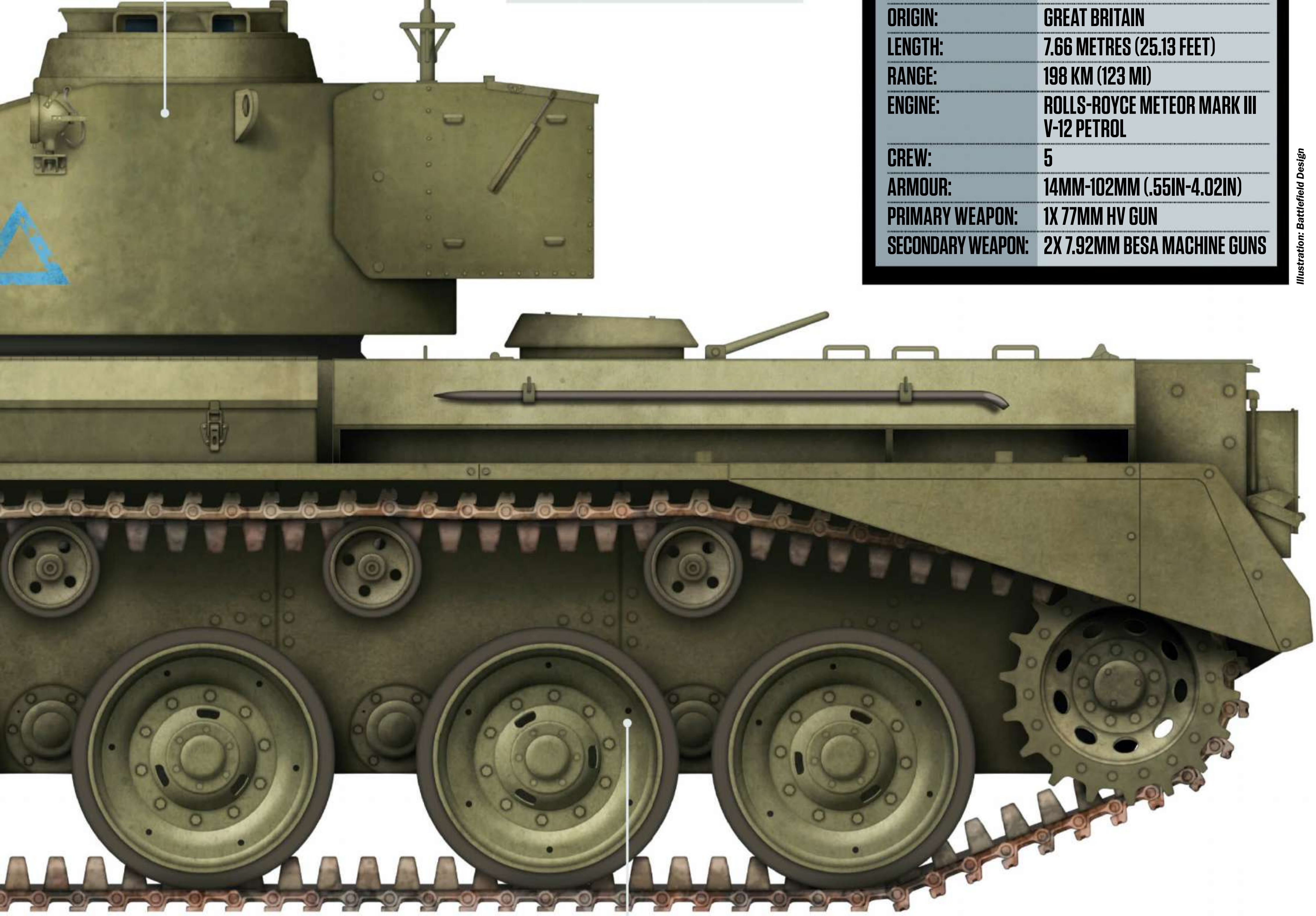
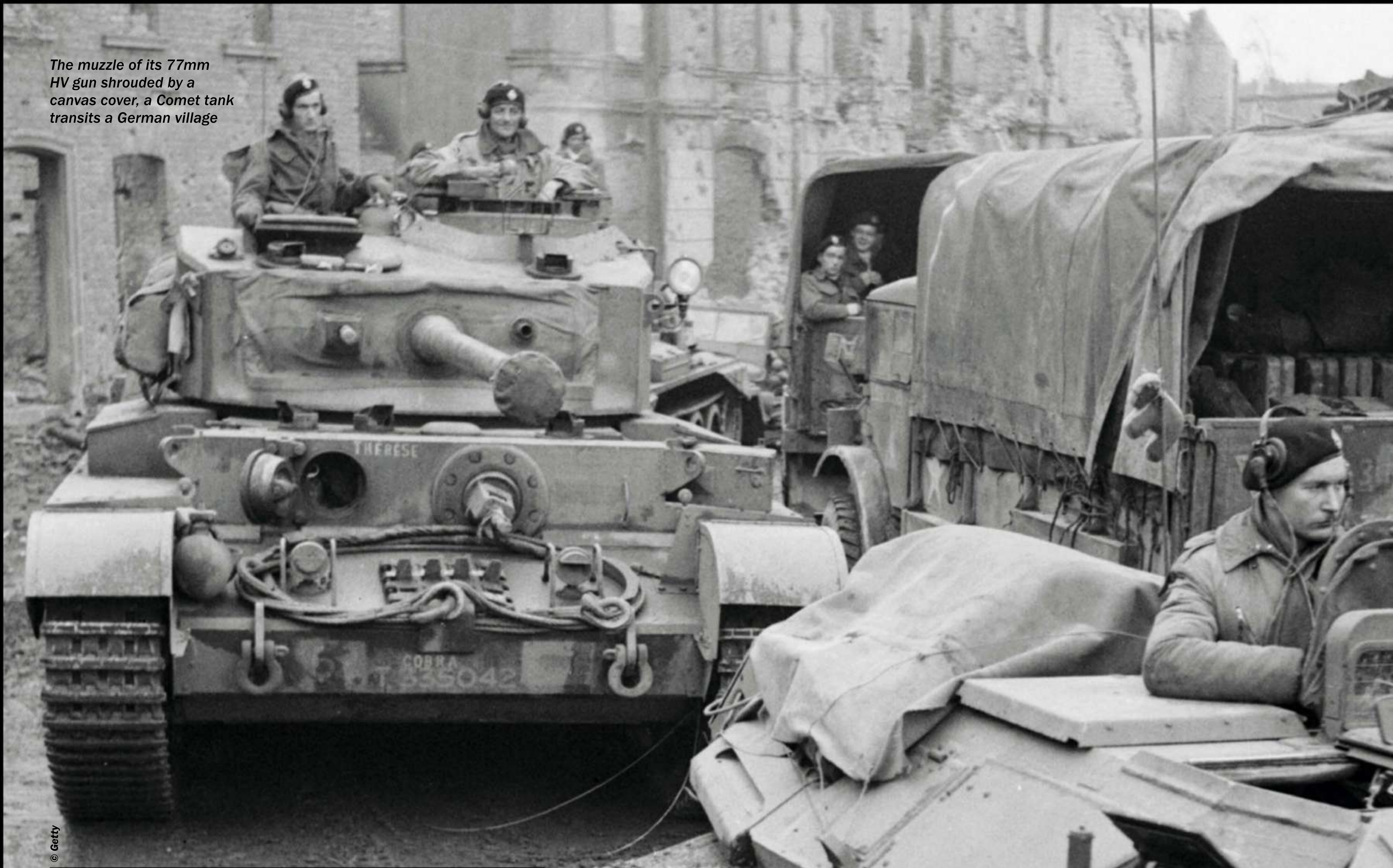


Illustration: Battlefield Design

CHRISTIE SUSPENSION

The Comet was the last British tank to employ the Christie suspension, which facilitated good speed and cross-country performance but occupied valuable internal space. Field maintenance was somewhat complicated. Five pairs of rubber-rimmed road wheels and four pairs of return rollers were attached on either side.

> “FOR THE BRITISH MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT, THE MOST PRACTICAL MEANS OF UPGRADING TANK PERFORMANCE INVOLVED INCREASED FIREPOWER AND ECONOMICAL USE OF RESOURCES”



The muzzle of its 77mm HV gun shrouded by a canvas cover, a Comet tank transits a German village

© Getty

ARMAMENT

The main weapon of the Comet was the Armstrong-Vickers 77mm HV, a modified version of the outstanding QF 17-pounder field gun. Although it fired a 76.2mm shell, it was so named to avoid confusion with other weapons of similar nomenclature. To accommodate the 77mm HV, the turret ring of the Cromwell chassis was lengthened. The breech of the weapon was reduced, allowing shorter recoil. The 77mm HV was extremely accurate at long distances firing various shell types, although armour-piercing capability was slightly diminished. Besa 7.92mm machine guns were installed on the hull and mantlet, adjacent to the main weapon.

The crew of a Comet tank in the field loads shells for its main weapon, the 77mm HV gun

Source: Wiki / PD / Gov

© Alamy

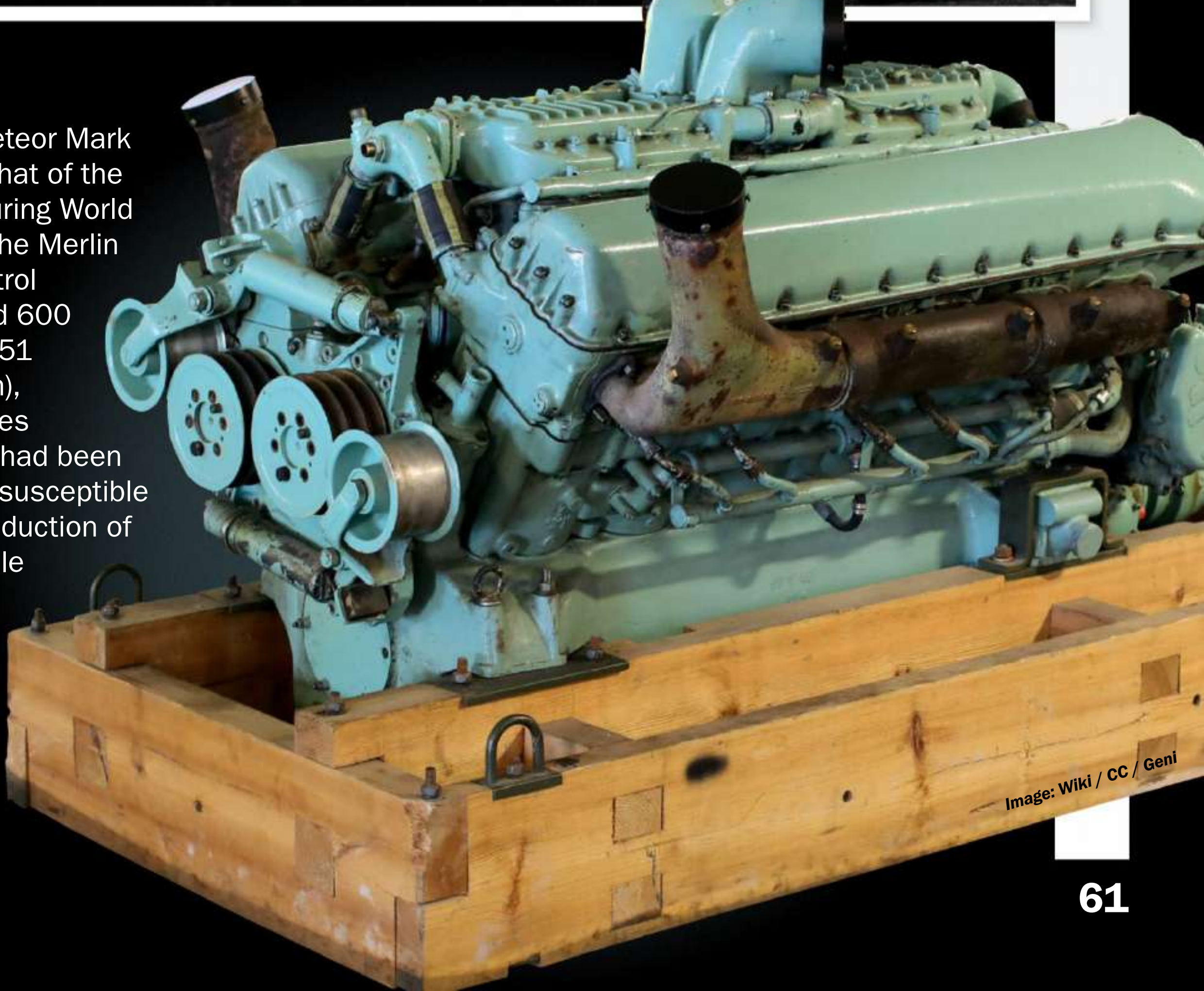
Wide tracks gave the Comet cruiser tank great stability and improved cross-country performance, particularly in wet conditions

DESIGN

Although the Comet tank's early design borrowed much from the preceding Cromwell, several alterations were made to improve overall operational effectiveness. Among these were a strengthened suspension with the addition of return rollers and tracks widened to 18 inches from the earlier 15.5 inches, along with a reconfigured turret that accommodated the heavy 77mm HV gun. Safety hatches for the hull gunner and driver were added, and the installation of a rear-mounted telephone allowed the crew to talk with accompanying infantrymen. Armour protection was upgraded, while the hull was fully welded.

ENGINE

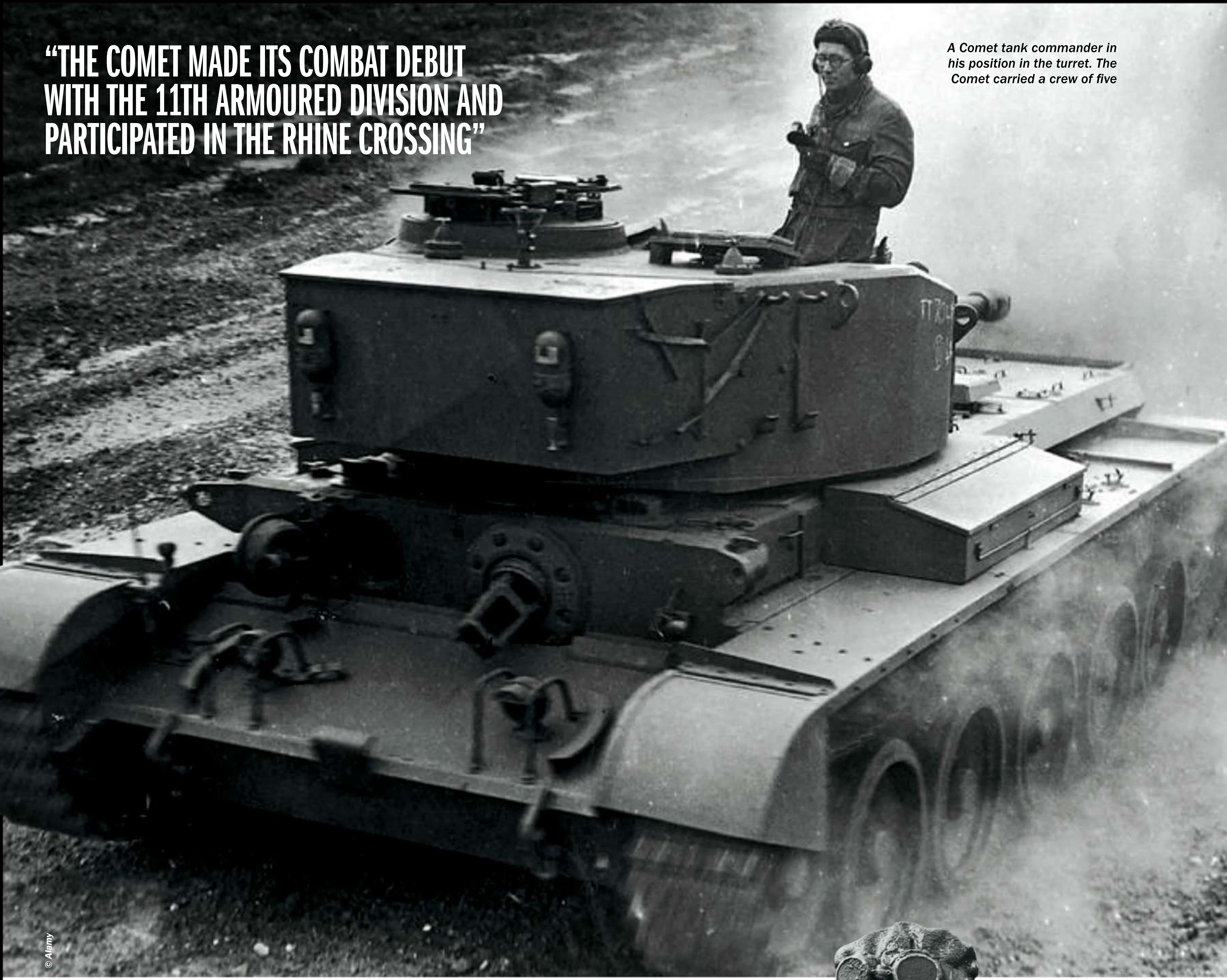
The Comet's Rolls-Royce Meteor Mark III tank engine, identical to that of the Cromwell, was developed during World War II from components of the Merlin aircraft engine. The V-12 petrol Meteor powerplant produced 600 horsepower, a top speed of 51 kilometres per hour (32 mph), and a range of 198 kilometres (123 miles). Earlier engines had been deemed underpowered and susceptible to breakdowns, but the introduction of the Meteor provided a reliable tank engine for British armoured vehicles for the first time during the war. Producers included Rolls-Royce, Rover Company and Morris factories.



***Below:** This example of the Rolls-Royce Meteor Mark III engine resides at the Bovington Tank Museum*

Image: Wiki / CC / Geni

> “THE COMET MADE ITS COMBAT DEBUT WITH THE 11TH ARMOURED DIVISION AND PARTICIPATED IN THE RHINE CROSSING”



A Comet tank commander in his position in the turret. The Comet carried a crew of five

© Alamy

CREW COMPARTMENT

The interior of the Comet cruiser tank had room to accommodate 61 rounds of heavy ammunition and a crew of five in the turret and hull, including the commander, driver, loader/radio operator, gunner, and the co-driver/hull gunner. The driver sat forward and to the right in the hull. His field of vision was excellent, either through a hinged visor opening or periscope. The co-driver/hull gunner sat to his left, separated by a bulkhead, and operated a single Besa 7.92mm machine gun. The commander, radio operator/loader, and gunner were positioned in the turret.

A smiling Comet cruiser tank driver stands outside his hull position following a demonstration

© Getty

SERVICE HISTORY

The prototype A34 cruiser tank, soon nicknamed the Comet, was unveiled in February 1944 and rapidly entered production, reaching forward armoured units on the Continent near the end of the year. Arguably the finest British tank to see combat in World War II, it was available in limited numbers. Only 1,186 were completed before production ceased in 1945, and 26 were lost. The Comet made its combat debut with the 11th Armoured Division and participated in the Rhine crossing and the July 1945 victory parade in Berlin.

Two main variants, A and B, were manufactured, differing in exhaust configuration. Only Type A saw service in World War II. The Comet remained in British service until 1958 and with the armies of Myanmar, Finland, South Africa, Ireland, Cuba, and Somalia into the 1980s. South Africa developed a Comet-based armoured maintenance vehicle to support their Mk1A tank. Other flamethrower and anti-tank variants were apparently abandoned during the prototype stage.

This Comet tank, nicknamed Victor, rumbles along a dirt track, its 77mm HV gun protruding forward

© Alamy

VICTOR
VICTOR
53
T335227

Berlin, Germany, November 1950: A British Comet tank (33 tons), one of 12 which had recently arrived in the capital, drives through the Berlin streets on its way to the Grunewald forest for manoeuvre operations

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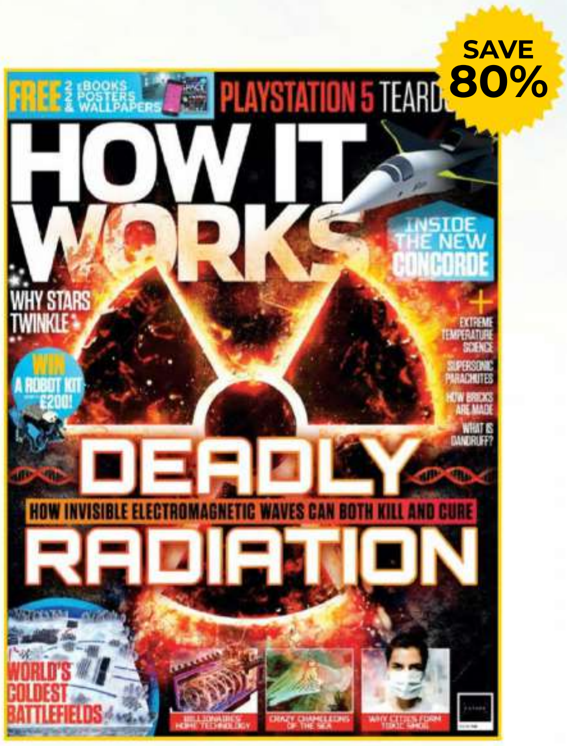
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FALKLANDS SINKINGS

Author and historian Paul Brown uncovers new information on the ships lost in the 1982 War

The 1982 invasion of the Falkland Islands posed a unique threat to Britain's military. Located over 8,000 miles away in the South Atlantic, any operation to confront the Argentinian occupation of the islands was bound to rely heavily on the Royal Navy. Yet at the time the navy was in a state of transition, with one of its carriers, HMS Invincible, was on the brink of being sold. Nonetheless, a task force sailed south, including civilian vessels pressed into military service.

By the end of the short but bloody conflict, several of these ships were sadly lost, along with them many lives. Atlantic Conveyor, a converted container ship used to transport Sea Harriers and helicopters, was lost to enemy action on 25 May. In his new book *Abandon Ship*, Paul Brown chronicles the events surrounding this and the other major sinkings during the war, drawing from first-hand accounts as well as official reports. Here, Brown discusses the loss of Conveyor and what lessons the Royal Navy learned from the tragedy.

You refer to Atlantic Conveyor as an unsung member of the British task force. What made it, or its cargo, so important to the British South Atlantic operations?

She was rapidly converted from a combined container ship and car carrier to take Harriers and Chinook and Wessex helicopters down to the battle zone. These were the first reinforcements to the aircraft taken south aboard task force ships. The helicopters would be particularly important for transporting troops and heavy equipment from the landing beach at San Carlos to assault locations where the Argentine troops would be engaged, and the Harriers would replace any losses.

The upper deck's edges were lined with a three-deep stack of containers and portacabins to provide additional accommodation and valuable aircraft repair workshop space, while also creating a sheltered pen for the helicopters and Harriers. Equipment and materials for the construction of a Harrier forward operating base ashore were carried below deck. This base would make a huge improvement to the combat air patrols, enabling them to stay on station for much longer. Also below deck was a host of vital military stores, including tentage and tent heaters for the entire military force in the Falklands, 12 combat support boats, floating rubber fuel tanks and pumping equipment, water desalination equipment, generators, lighting sets and munitions.

What were the main defensive provisions in place to protect the carrier group, and other ships, against Argentinian air strikes?

The biggest threat to the carrier group came from Argentina's 100 strike aircraft. Combat air patrols operated by Sea Harriers were designed to intercept incoming aircraft but were limited in their endurance. However, the 20 Sea Harriers from Hermes and Invincible (later reinforced by eight more aircraft) destroyed 23 aircraft in air-to-air combat for the loss of none of their own number in air combat. Another 17 aircraft were destroyed by the task force's anti-air missiles and guns. Medium-range air defence was provided by Type 42 destroyers stationed to the west of the carrier group. Their Sea Dart missiles were hampered by the tactics of the Argentine pilots, who flew in low over land to defeat the destroyers' fire-control radar, so Sea Dart's success rate against such aircraft was very poor.

> **"THE 20 SEA HARRIERS FROM HERMES AND INVINCIBLE DESTROYED 23 AIRCRAFT IN AIR-TO-AIR COMBAT FOR THE LOSS OF NONE OF THEIR OWN NUMBER IN AIR COMBAT"**

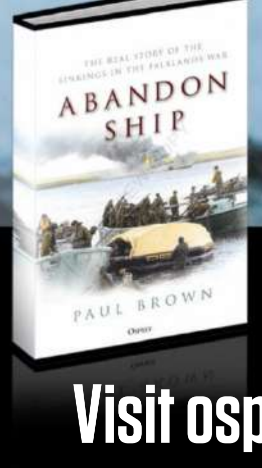
For aircraft that got through these defences, Sea Wolf missiles launched by Type 22 frigates were deployed, with mixed success, accounting for two confirmed kills and three 'possibles' from eight launches. The obsolescent Seacat missile was widely used, with little result – there was no clear-cut case of a Seacat kill.

Nuclear-powered submarines were stationed close to the air bases on the Argentinian coast to monitor outgoing flights and give early warning of impending attacks.

How damaging was the loss of Conveyor and its cargo to the British war effort? And what might have been possible on the ground had the ship and its cargo been saved?

When Atlantic Conveyor arrived on station, her Harriers flew to the carriers, leaving the Chinook and Wessex helicopters on board when she was lost. They would have been of massive value to the advance of troops on Argentinian positions at Goose Green and Port Stanley. The troops could have advanced much more quickly and without the levels of fatigue they experienced.

The capture of Stanley and surrender of the Argentinian forces would have been accelerated, probably with some lives saved. Crucially, the troops which had to be taken by Sir Galahad to Fitzroy could have been transported by helicopter, eliminating the need for that ship to be risked and the loss of 48 lives, with many others badly injured. The Harrier base ashore, although eventually



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constructed, would have been operational much earlier, allowing greater protection to the fleet and troops by combat air patrols and the RAF ground-attack Harriers.

In your book Abandon Ship you describe the changing rules of engagement during the early weeks of the conflict, especially around the sinking of ARA General Belgrano. What effect did this have on both sides' preparations?
While keeping their surface warships outside the total exclusion zone, the Argentines were aware that even then they might be attacked. The British rules of engagement precluded this, but were changed on 2 May so that the submarine Conqueror could sink the cruiser General Belgrano outside the zone.

Conqueror had been shadowing Belgrano for 29 hours so she was able to attack if the cruiser entered the exclusion zone or the rules of engagement changed. After her loss Argentina's surface fleet retreated to their bases, removing the threats of their aircraft carrier Veinticinco de Mayo, the two modern Type 42 destroyers and older Exocet-armed destroyers.

However, one of the Argentinian submarines, ARA San Luis, was deployed inside the exclusion zone and made several attempts to attack British warships. These were unsuccessful due to problems with the torpedoes and the submarine retired to her base. But it was sobering that the Royal Navy's considerable anti-submarine forces did not detect and destroy San Luis.

A Harrier attempting a trial landing on the main deck of Atlantic Conveyor, April 1982

© Alamy

What were the major lessons learned, or new measures adopted, by the Royal Navy as a result of its losses during the war?
The survivability of the Type 21 and Type 42 escorts when damaged was in question. The older and larger County class destroyer Glamorgan had survived an Exocet hit and Antrim had survived bombing, as had the older frigates Plymouth and Argonaut, but the later classes had been less resilient and were vulnerable to loss through fires. The flammability of materials used, often to improve habitability, damage control and firefighting procedures and training would have to be re-examined. Changes to the design of waterproof doors and hatches, the provision of more escape hatches, making bulkheads more smoke-tight, the re-siting of fuel tanks, and additional fire pumps and breathing apparatus were all needed.

The advisability of using ships that had been built to mercantile standards of damage tolerance (such as Atlantic Conveyor and Sir Galahad) was questioned. Their use in transporting troops and equipment in combat zones was extremely hazardous and, if used, they needed to be equipped with close-in self-defence weapons and chaff launchers.

There were glaring shortcomings in the performance of escorts. The lack of good close-in weapon systems (CIWS) had been exposed. CIWS would be fitted to the carriers, the assault ships, Bristol, and the Type 42 destroyers. Sea Wolf and Sea Dart missile systems would have to be improved to deal with low-level attacks and have all-weather capability. The shipborne radars in the Type 21 and Type 42 escorts would have to be improved: the lack of a true moving target indication mode had been a serious problem. Argentinian aircraft could not be seen against the background clutter of the islands, and aircraft or missiles flying low over the sea could not be detected. The newer radars in Exeter and the Type 22s had performed better than the earlier types.

The lack of airborne early warning was a big problem and was addressed by equipping Sea King helicopters with modified Searchwater radars. Chaff and electronic countermeasures would be further developed to deal with sea-skimming missiles. There was a need for more intensive training for air defence weapon system operators, using more realistic targets. The Type 22 frigate lacked a main gun, meaning it could not be used for naval gunfire support operations (this was to be remedied in the last four of the class).

The death throes of General Belgrano, 2 May 1982. Her bow had been blown off and 272 men died in the explosions and flooding. The survivors took to life rafts, in which they had to wait up to 48 hours before being rescued

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MUSEUMS & EVENTS

Discover Derry-Londonderry's connection with the Spanish Armada, America's WWI museum and the oldest stone castle in Scotland

The Spanish shipwreck

Derry-Londonderry's Tower Museum has launched a new exhibition to commemorate the 50th anniversary of a remarkable maritime discovery

La Trinidad Valencera was a 1,000-tonne Venetian merchant ship that was commandeered by the Spanish in Sicily. She was refitted to become one of the 120 galleons that formed part of the huge Spanish Armada that sailed for England in 1588. Unfavourable weather sealed the Armada's fate and many ships were forced to sail north and circumnavigate the British Isles before they could return to Spain. It is believed that over 20 Spanish ships were wrecked along the north and west coasts of Ireland as the Armada made its way home after its defeat.

La Trinidad Valencera had been badly damaged during naval battles with the English and sank off Kinnagoe, County Donegal, in Ireland on 12 September 1588. Many crew members drowned and 300 survivors were massacred by Irish forces loyal to the English Crown. Only the officers were spared, for ransom, while a handful managed to escape to neutral Scotland.

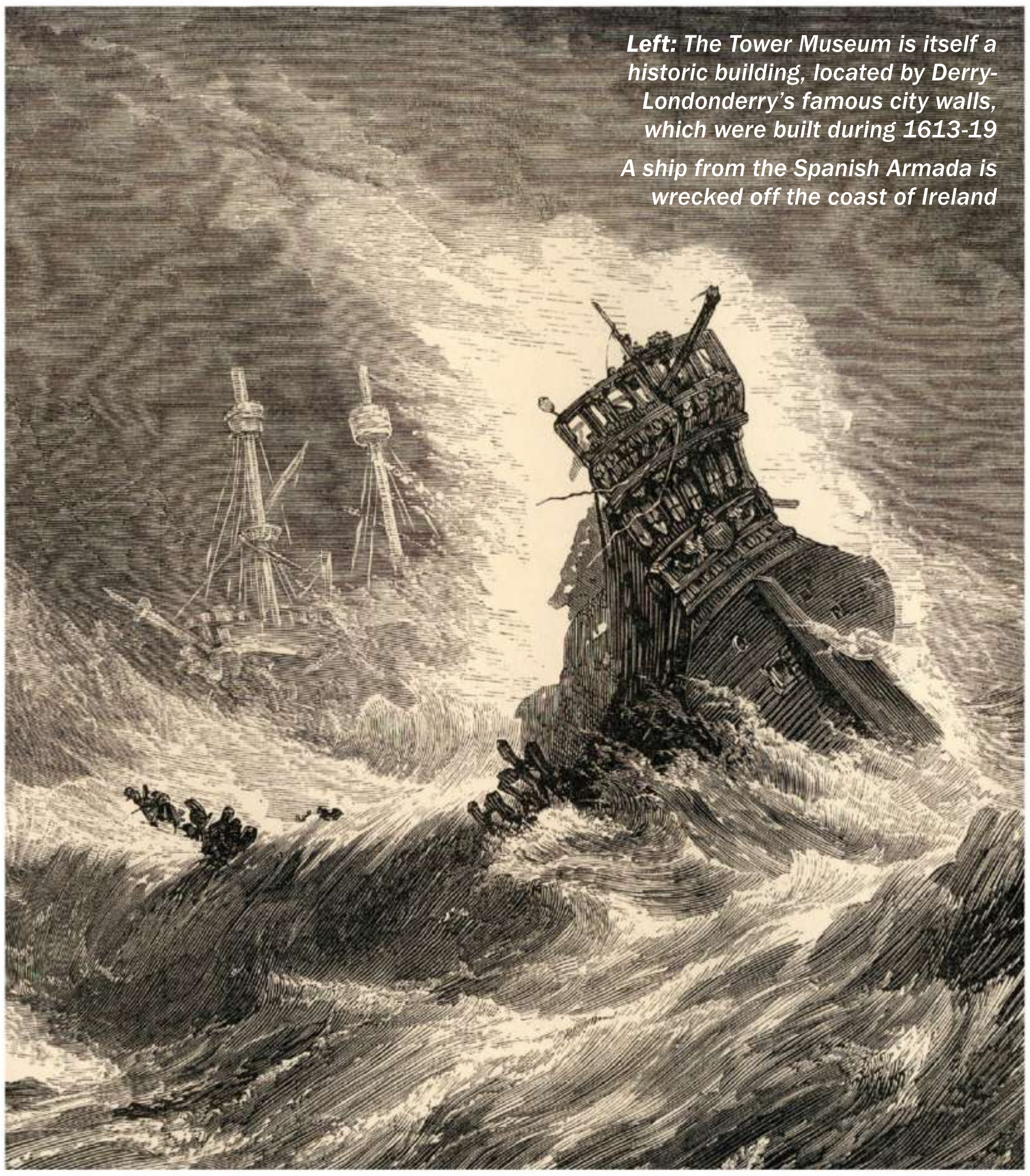
The shipwreck was later discovered on 20 February 1971 by divers of the City of Derry Sub Aqua Club. They found well-preserved cannon and other items such as ceramics, leather and textiles. Although treasures found on a similar ship called Girona off Northern Ireland are more famous, the finds on La Trinidad Valencera are the largest number to come from an Armada wreck. Many of her artefacts are now preserved at the Tower Museum in Derry-Londonderry. For the 50th anniversary of the ship's discovery, the museum has spent the last ten years creating a spectacular exhibition called An Armada Shipwreck – La Trinidad Valencera. The ship's story is told over four levels using innovative architectural design and information technology, with audio commentary available in six languages.

The exhibition has been organised by the Tower Museum in partnership with the Inishowen Maritime Museum and the Nerve Centre. It was due to be open to the public but Covid-19 restrictions have temporarily closed the museum. However, the museum is proud to offer exciting new content to bring the exhibition into homes. Visitors can take a virtual tour of La Trinidad Valencera's exhibition on the collections section of the Tower Museum's website. This includes an audio guide and floating icons to navigate through the exhibition. Visitors can also zoom in to read captions and view images in more detail. There's even an aerial option from the top of the Tower Museum with spectacular panoramic views over Derry-Londonderry and the River Foyle.

To view the online exhibition visit: www.towermuseumcollections.com

tower museum
DIVIDING IRELAND EXHIBITION
1920
1925

Left: *The Tower Museum is itself a historic building, located by Derry-Londonderry's famous city walls, which were built during 1613-19*



A ship from the Spanish Armada is wrecked off the coast of Ireland

Images © Alamy

America's Great War

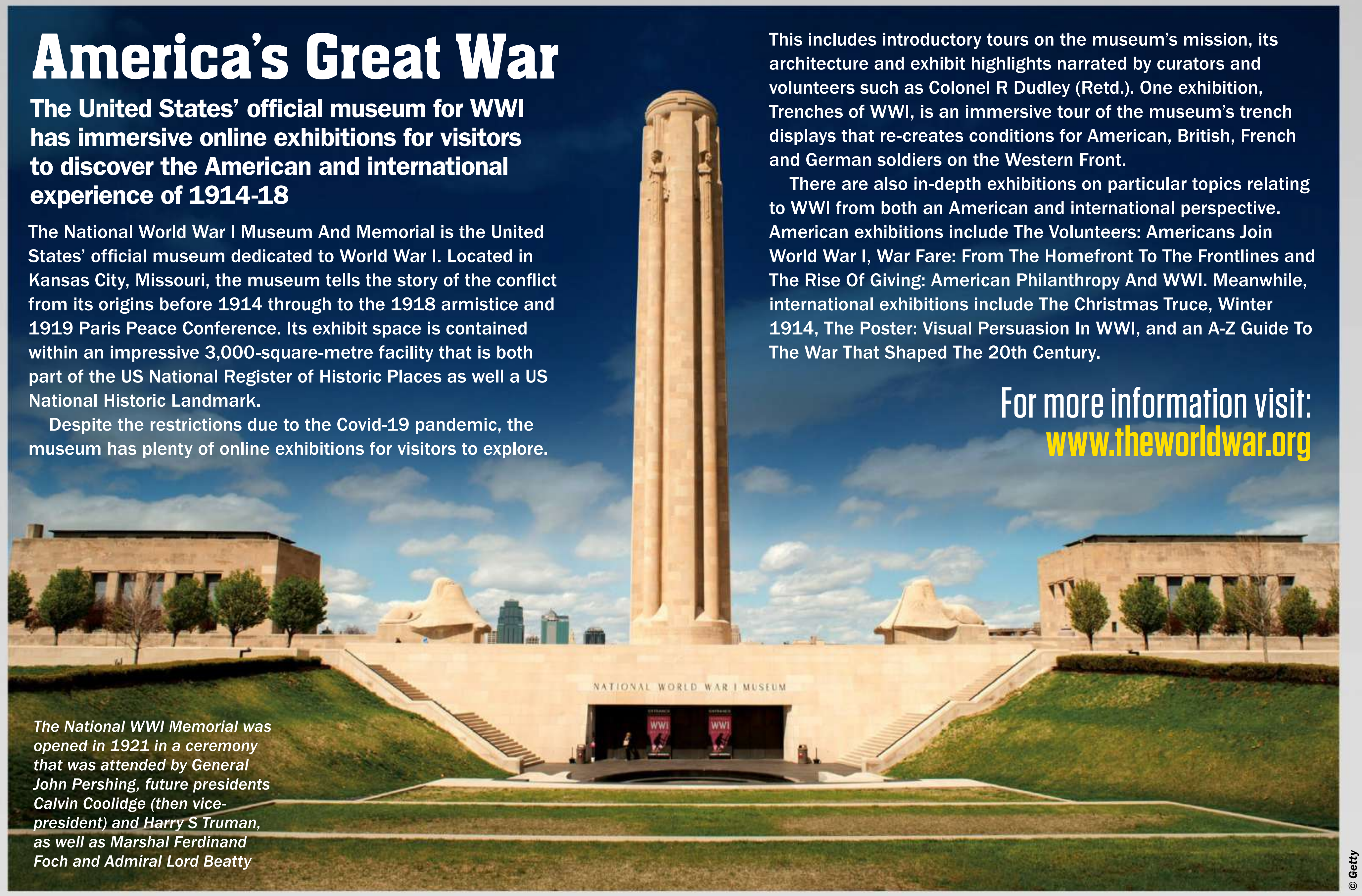
The United States' official museum for WWI has immersive online exhibitions for visitors to discover the American and international experience of 1914-18

The National World War I Museum And Memorial is the United States' official museum dedicated to World War I. Located in Kansas City, Missouri, the museum tells the story of the conflict from its origins before 1914 through to the 1918 armistice and 1919 Paris Peace Conference. Its exhibit space is contained within an impressive 3,000-square-metre facility that is both part of the US National Register of Historic Places as well a US National Historic Landmark.

Despite the restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the museum has plenty of online exhibitions for visitors to explore. This includes introductory tours on the museum's mission, its architecture and exhibit highlights narrated by curators and volunteers such as Colonel R Dudley (Retd.). One exhibition, Trenches of WWI, is an immersive tour of the museum's trench displays that re-creates conditions for American, British, French and German soldiers on the Western Front.

There are also in-depth exhibitions on particular topics relating to WWI from both an American and international perspective. American exhibitions include The Volunteers: Americans Join World War I, War Fare: From The Homefront To The Frontlines and The Rise Of Giving: American Philanthropy And WWI. Meanwhile, international exhibitions include The Christmas Truce, Winter 1914, The Poster: Visual Persuasion In WWI, and an A-Z Guide To The War That Shaped The 20th Century.

For more information visit: www.theworldwar.org



The National WWI Memorial was opened in 1921 in a ceremony that was attended by General John Pershing, future presidents Calvin Coolidge (then vice-president) and Harry S Truman, as well as Marshal Ferdinand Foch and Admiral Lord Beatty

© Getty

Secrets of Sween

This impressive fortress is considered to be the earliest-built stone castle on the Scottish mainland

Located near the village of Achnamara on the west coast of Argyll, Scotland, Castle Sween was built in the late 11th century by Suibhne, the nephew of the king of Ulster and high king of Ireland. Argyll lay outside the Kingdom of Scotland at this time and it was Suibhne that gave his name to both the castle and the local MacSween clan. The castle has been confidently dated to the late 11th century because it has broad buttresses on the outside walls as well as a noticeable absence of windows and other openings apart from the entrances.

Over the centuries, Castle Sween was held by various families including the MacSweens, Menteiths, MacDonalds and Campbells as the lords of Arran and Knapdale. During the British Civil Wars, it was attacked and burnt by the forces of Alasdair MacColla and his Royalist Irish Confederate followers in 1647. Since 1933, the castle has been in public care and is currently under the protection of Historic Scotland.

The fortress is positioned on a low rocky ridge overlooking Loch Sween and is open and free to visit all year round. Parking is located on the east shore of the loch off the B8025, although it is a 20-30 minute walk downhill from the car park. Strong footwear is recommended to visit the castle due to the remoteness of its location.

Excavation work at Castle Sween during the 1920s uncovered various items, including an arrowhead, a Neolithic six-knobbed stone ball and three medieval brooches

For more information visit: www.historicenvironment.scot

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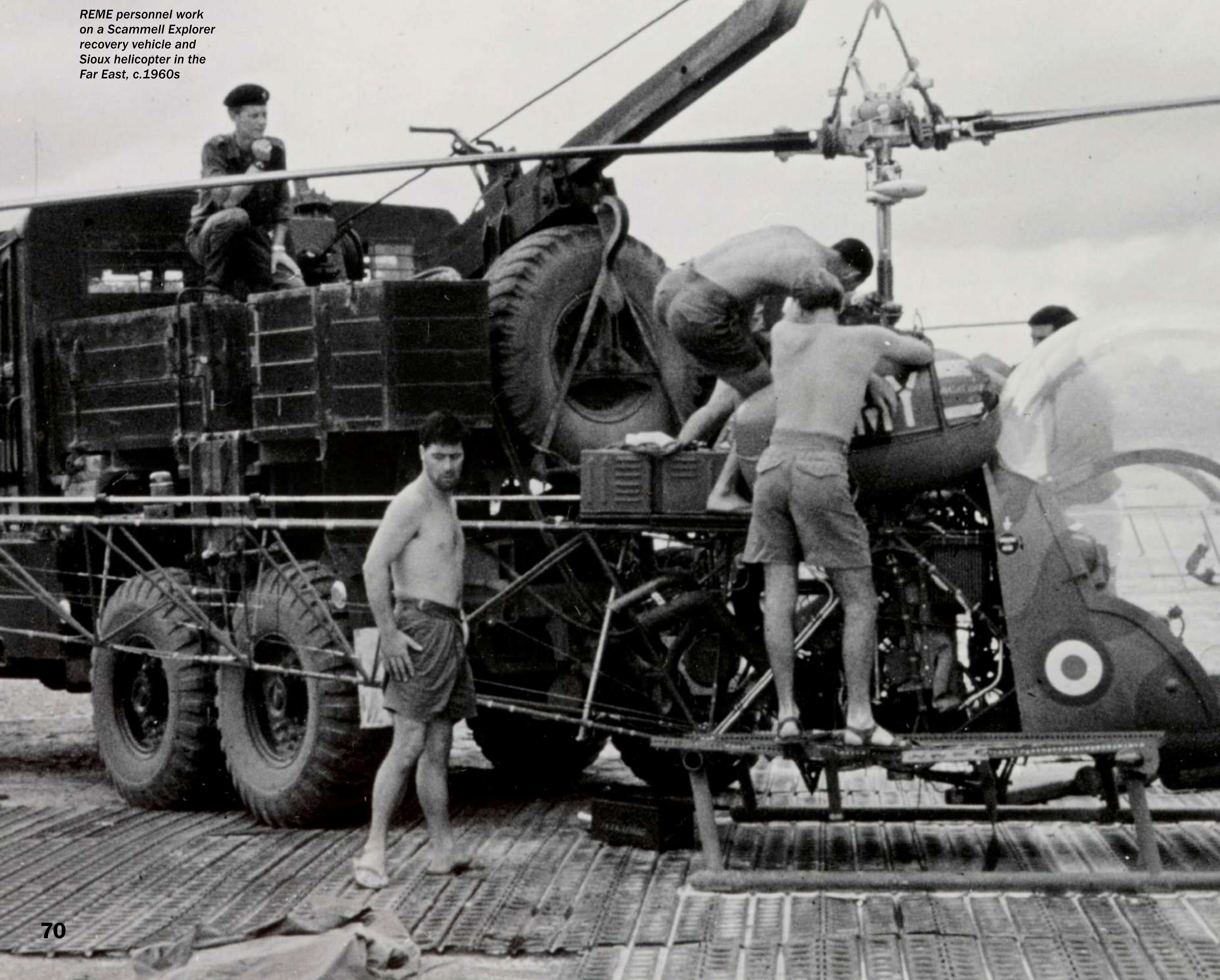
UP CLOSE WITH THE ENGINEERS

The REME Museum has launched a new online photo archive of many previously unseen images from the British Army's vital maintenance corps

The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) is the corps that keeps the British Army's equipment in fighting condition. These professional engineers maintain, repair, recover, manufacture and modify everything from trucks to weapons systems, and REME's expertise is crucial to the success of the operations they support, both at home and overseas. The REME Museum in Wiltshire,



REME personnel work on a Scammell Explorer recovery vehicle and Sioux helicopter in the Far East, c.1960s

England, tells the corps' story, starting with its formation during WWII. Based just outside the former RAF Lyneham, the museum's modern, family friendly displays unlock this fascinating facet of army history.

Like other museums and visitor attractions, the REME Museum closed its doors for much of 2020. However, its staff have still been busy making the sure its remarkable collection can still be enjoyed. It's now proud to launch a brand new online archive, sharing hundreds of rarely seen military history photos with the public.

The photo archive was created by digital specialists Max Communications, with its team scanning thousands of photographs from albums in the REME Museum's archive. The museum team then began the intensive work of transcribing options, putting names to faces and identifying locations.

The museum's new webpage, which has been years in the making, is a treasure trove for family historians, military history enthusiasts and those interested in army life. An intriguing, wide-ranging record of REME activities across the years, the images chart REME personnel's service in many 20th century conflicts, including the Korean War and Mau Mau Uprising, as well as training, parades and the social side of army life.

Visitors to the website can browse by date, location and theme. Users can also search using keywords, which is great when researching units or barracks where family relatives may have served. Prints in a range of sizes can be purchased for a reasonable fee and shipped worldwide.

The museum's director Major Rick Henderson (Retd.) says, "When the REME was at its largest during WWII, it employed more than 150,000 soldiers and 80,000 officers. If you have relatives with an engineering background, who were in the army during the war or completed their National Service, there's a good chance they served with the REME. This fantastic project will provide the opportunity for researchers to access images that will hopefully add to their family history story."

To view the new REME photo website visit: www.rememuseum.photos

The less serious side of REME life is also shown on the new website, including this photo of a Sergeants' Mess Ball at the School of Electronic Engineering in October 1972

Below: *The museum has a variety of vehicles in its collection, including specialised recovery vehicles and tractors, tanks, helicopters, cars and half-tracks*

All images © REME Museum

Male and female radar maintenance officers pictured during their training at Petersham, Greater London, during WWII

WWII THIS MONTH...

MAY 1941

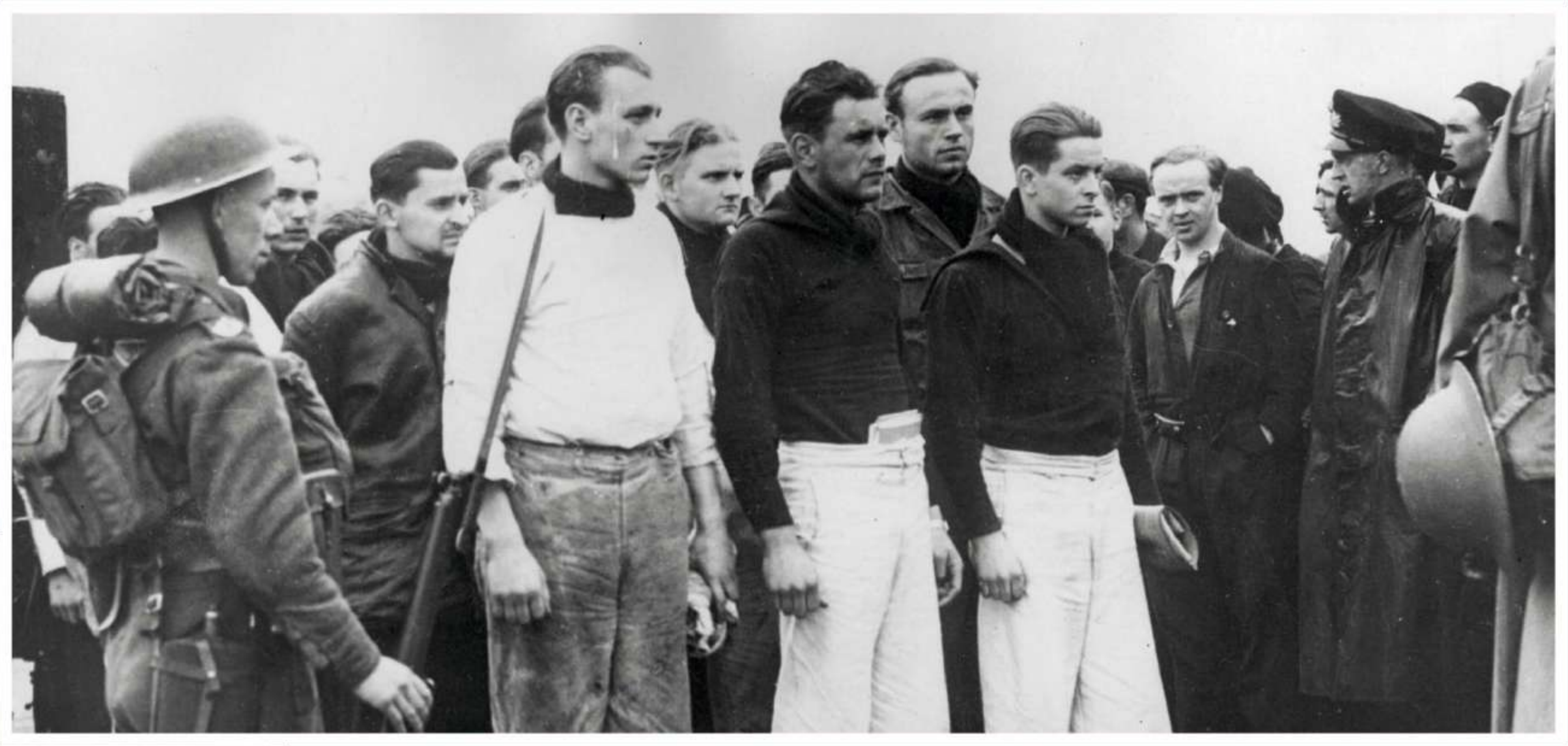
To commemorate 80 years since the Second World War, **History of War** will be taking a look at some of the key events taking place during each month of the conflict

HESS' 'FLIGHT FOR PEACE'

British soldiers pose next to the wreckage of Rudolf Hess' Messerschmitt ME110, which he had crashed in Scotland on 10 May. The bizarre and daring flight of Hitler's right-hand man took both German and British authorities by total surprise. Hess claimed to have made the journey to broker a peace between Britain and Germany, to no avail. He was briefly held in the Tower of London, and after the war was the last remaining inmate of the notorious Spandau Prison, where he was held for 20 years.

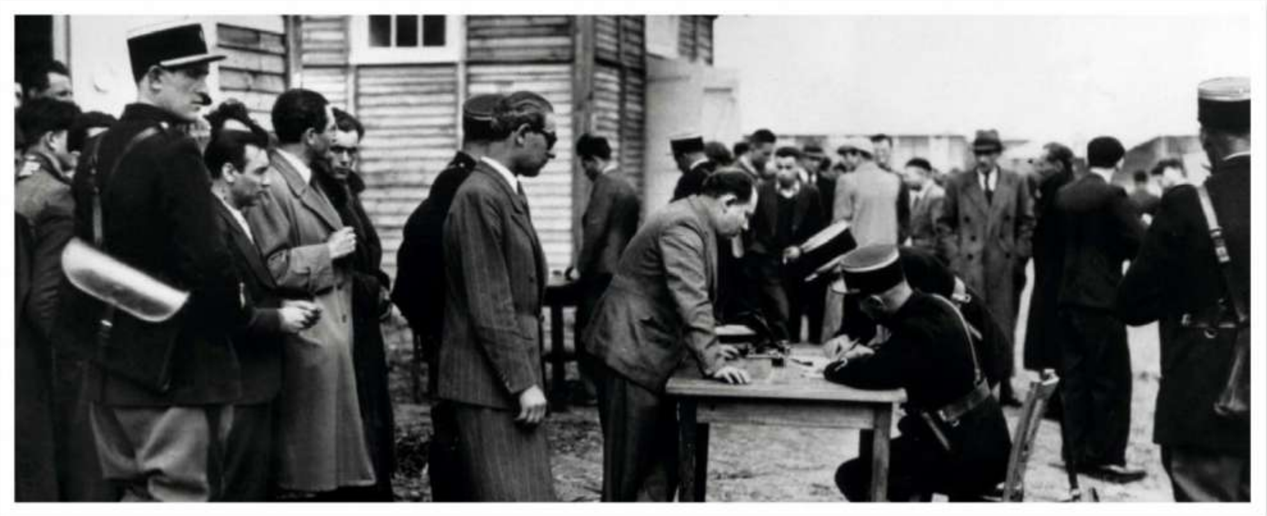
SURVIVORS OF THE BISMARCK

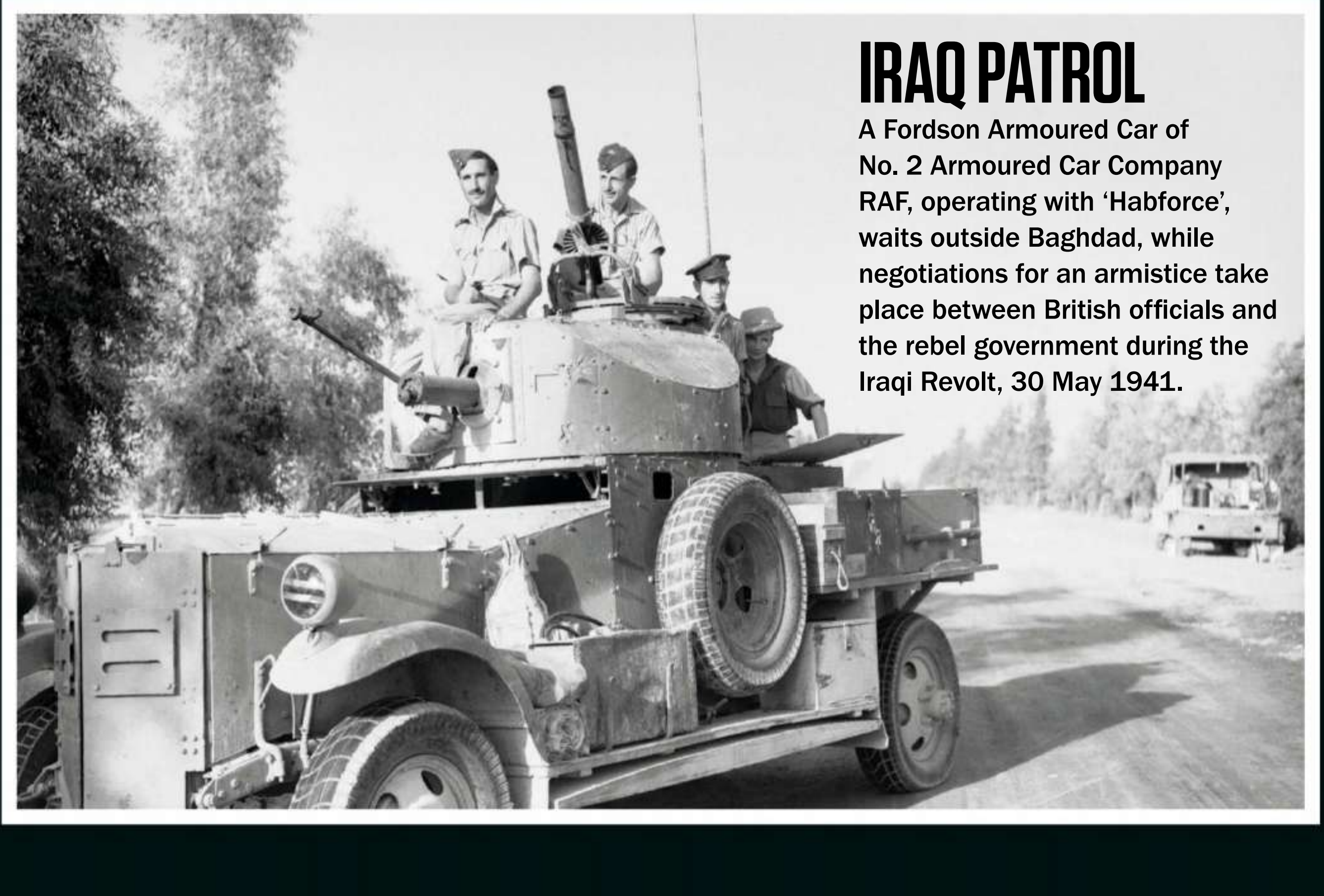
German survivors from the Bismarck are held under guard after arriving at a British port. The famous battleship was sunk in the Atlantic on 27 May.



THE HOLOCAUST IN PARIS

In May 1941, German and French authorities began arresting and rounding up mostly foreign Jews living in the French capital. They were taken to transit camps Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande, outside the city. Many of the inmates were Polish Jews who had originally fled from Germany. Most of these prisoners would next be taken to Auschwitz. The transit camps had originally been built by the French to house expected German POWs, but were later used to hold French POWs after the Nazi occupation, and then Jewish prisoners. Between 1941 and 1943 some 16,000 deported Jews passed through the camps, before being taken east to concentration camps.





IRAQ PATROL

A Fordson Armoured Car of No. 2 Armoured Car Company RAF, operating with 'Habforce', waits outside Baghdad, while negotiations for an armistice take place between British officials and the rebel government during the Iraqi Revolt, 30 May 1941.

Images © Getty

WWII THIS MONTH...

BATTLE FOR CRETE

On 20 May, German Fallschirmjager (paratroopers) began the assault of the Greek island of Crete. The island was a key position for Britain and her Allies, and its capture would earn the Germans a base and a foothold in the eastern Mediterranean. Initially the airborne attack stalled, but gradually the Germans were able to push the Allies back, and the island was hastily evacuated. The Allies lost over 15,000 killed or captured, while the Germans lost some 3,000 paratroopers.

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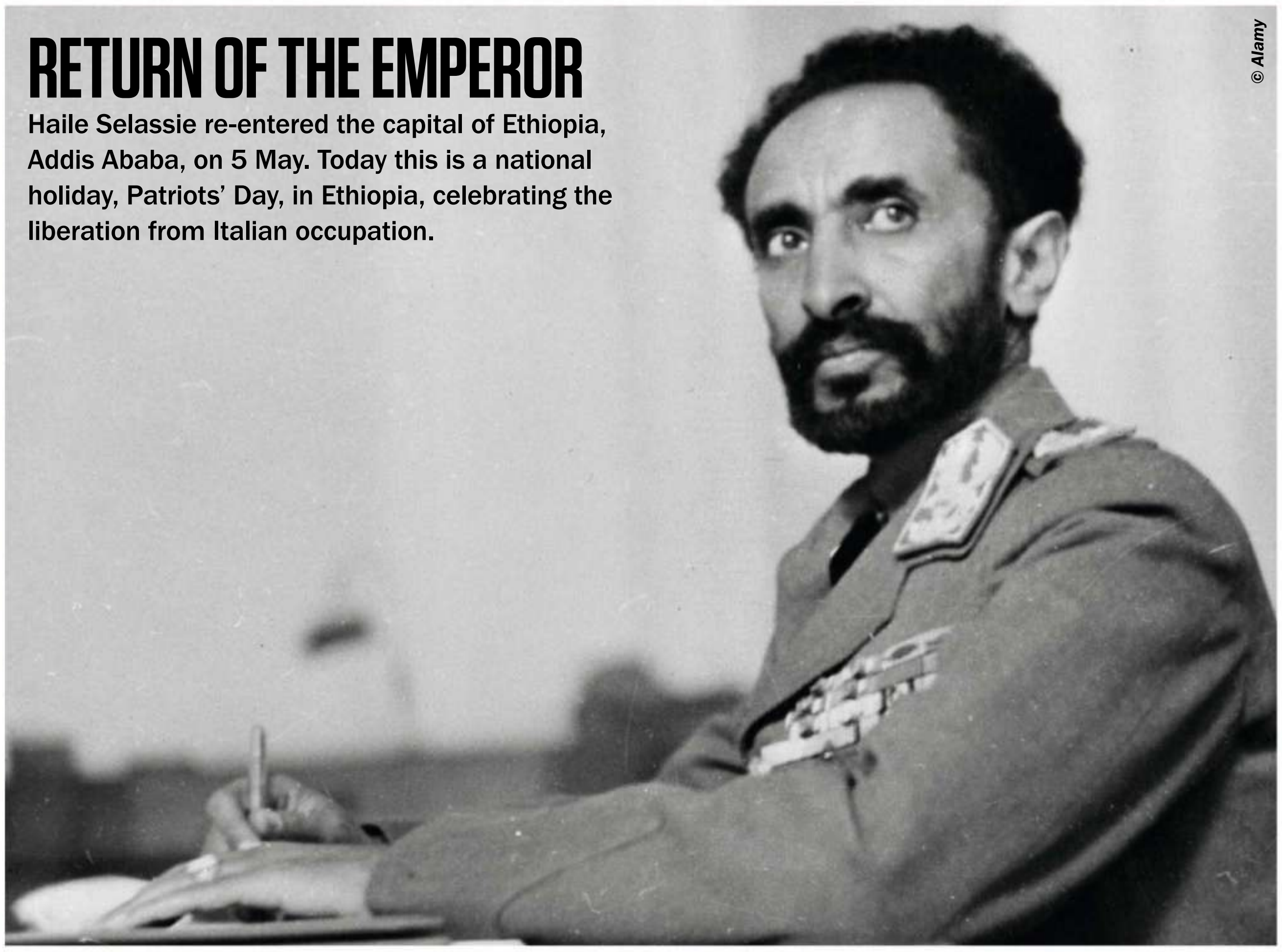
RETURN OF THE EMPEROR

Haile Selassie re-entered the capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, on 5 May. Today this is a national holiday, Patriots' Day, in Ethiopia, celebrating the liberation from Italian occupation.



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LIVERPOOL BLITZ

An injured woman is helped to a reception centre from a First Aid Post by wardens after her home was bombed. Under attack since the summer of 1940, Liverpool's large port was the target of Luftwaffe bombs again for eight consecutive nights in May 1941. Over 70,000 civilians were made homeless during the air raids, with over 3,300 killed or wounded.

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REVIEWS

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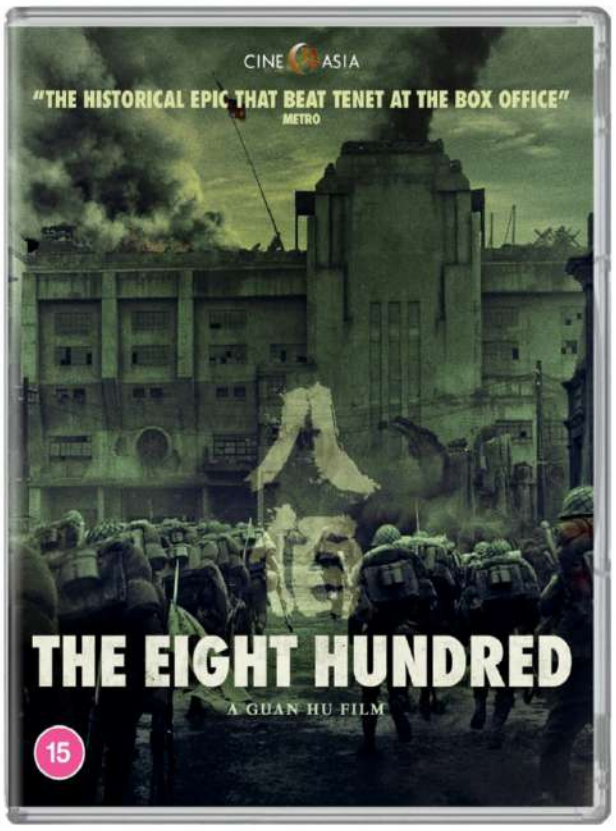


THE SIX-DAY BATTLE FOR SIHANG WAREHOUSE, COMMEMORATED IN CHINA BUT UNKNOWN IN THE WEST, IS RETOLD IN GORY SPLENDOUR

Asian war cinema is a rich and under-appreciated genre, with many of its best titles still unseen in Europe. *The Eight Hundred*, a 2020 release that topped box office records in China despite the Covid-19 pandemic, gathers up all the familiar tropes – duty, sacrifice, and dying for your country – and pushes them through a meat grinder. The plot itself is about a week-long fight over an abandoned warehouse, in which a few hundred Chinese Nationalist troops fought against the Imperial Japanese Army besieging Shanghai in 1937.

Context and dates matter too. The Second Sino-Japanese War was fought from 1937 until 1945, overlapping with WWII, and the movie takes place in the first year of the conflict. Shanghai, whose famed concessions are lovingly draped in neon to contrast the surrounding devastation, is the war's pivotal battle and a catastrophic defeat for the Chinese military; what actually took place in Sihang warehouse was a holding action to enable a retreat. It bears mentioning that China's communists were not in power at the time, being a rebel faction trapped in a remote province.

The Eight Hundred uses an abundance of tropes to convey its brutal heroism, and we experience the battle through the eyes of reluctant deserters who are trapped in the warehouse. However, a weakness in the plotting is how their so-called 'character arcs' meander a bit. The days of combat are graphically violent in the same vein as other war epics like the recent *Stalingrad* and classics such as *Saving Private Ryan*. All manner of fighting is depicted, from deafening shootouts to gruesome brawls, and in one memorable scene Chinese soldiers blow themselves up among the advancing Japanese.

As today's Chinese historical blockbusters go, this is a message movie as well: China and Japan are historical enemies and the latter is the brazen aggressor. Going by today's headlines, they still are. **MM**

THE REAPER'S HARVESTING SUMMER

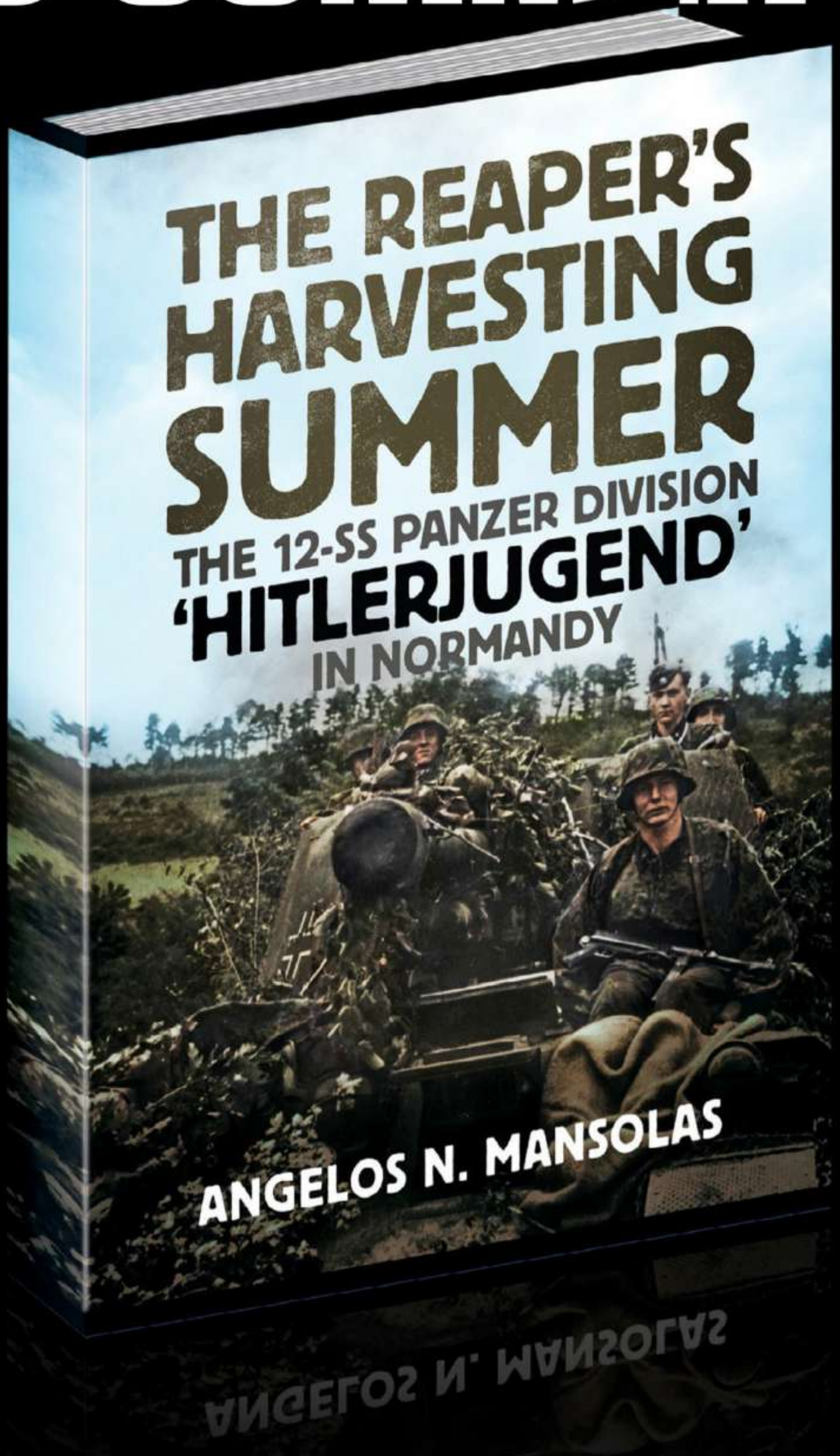
THE STORY OF THE 12-SS PANZER DIVISION, A UNIT OF GERMAN TEENAGERS THAT RECEIVED ITS BAPTISM OF FIRE IN THE NORMANDY CAMPAIGN

Author: **Angelos N Mansolas** **Publisher:** **Fonthill**
Price: **£35**

Few German Army formations are surrounded by as much legend and distinction as the 12-SS Panzer Division Hitlerjugend. In World War II's critical turning point of 1943 the German regime, reeling from a multi-front Allied offensive and a dwindling manpower supply, raised seven new Waffen-SS divisions. One of them was unique among the rest in that its troops were drawn mostly from youths under the age of 20 of the Hitler Youth Organisation.

Author Angelos N Mansolas contends this unit evolved into one of the most effective fighting formations in military history. For the highest levels of combat efficiency to be achieved, the division was built around a cadre of officers and NCOs from the Leibstandarte, all of whom had bloodied themselves on the Eastern Front and in other major campaigns.

© Getty



In March 1944, this grouping of teenage fighters was ordered to move to the area of Caen in Normandy, where it became part of the I-SS Panzer Corps. By the summer, with the German Army in full retreat northeast across France and Belgium, the 12-SS had ceased to exist as a coherent fighting formation. The young men of the unit had fought like seasoned veterans in numerous battles, including the disastrous Falaise Pocket. They suffered appalling losses before they were able to make their way back to Germany, where the survivors arrived in September 1944. The force had lost 60 per cent of its manpower in less than four months of constant action.

"I know every single one of these grenadiers," remarked the division's commander SS Oberführer Kurt Meyer. "The oldest is barely 18. These boys have not yet learned how to live, but by God, they know how to die." **JS**

TORPEDO

A DEEP DIVE INTO THE HORRORS OF WWII THAT'S HOLED BY SOME OUTLANDISH SCENES

Director: Sven Huybrechts **Starring:** Koen De Bouw, Thure Riefenstein, Ella-June Henrard

For any war film to be considered credible, moments of raw tension are essential, incidents that gnaw at the nerves and accurately convey the horror of staring death in the face. Sven Huybrechts successfully weaves several such episodes into this 102-minute WWII epic. Unfortunately, he also fails to resist the temptation of blowing a torpedo-sized hole in every single one of them thanks to a bizarre desire to intersperse harrowing and well-acted scenes of chaos and desperation with segments that can only be described as ludicrous.

Centred around a crew of Belgian guerrillas charged with piloting a stolen U-boat containing uranium from Congo to the US to aid the development of a nuclear bomb, *Torpedo* initially threatens to descend into WWII's answer to *The Expendables* before steadily building a believable and at times captivating story of selfless bravery in the face of a ruthless enemy.

Each member of the crew, led by the fanatically driven Stan (Koen De Bouw) and aided by a captive German U-boat skipper, brings something different to this adventure. It's a journey that slowly ratchets up the tension as the crew desperately try to evade their pursuers and navigate an ocean teeming with German ships intent on ending their mission prematurely. The lengths that these renegades have to go to just to survive, and their reasons for even wanting to partake in what seems destined to be a suicide mission (especially in Stan's case), are often truly horrific. The flashbacks that haunt Stan grab the viewer by the throat and force us to confront the realities of war in ways that most other films never dare to attempt. The eyes widen, the mouth hangs gaping, the feeling of dread is unbearable… and then something ridiculous surfaces like a submarine desperate to escape the pressure of the depths below.

Be it an act of marksmanship that would make Vasily Zaytsev look like an amateur or an aquatic feat that defies virtually every rule of physics and biology, the scenes that undermine this film are few, but it only takes one mine to condemn a ship to a watery grave. While the impossible parts of this film don't quite manage to do that, they certainly tear into the hull of an otherwise engrossing drama. **CG**

DEEP DIVE TO SURVIVE
TORPEDO:
U-235
15
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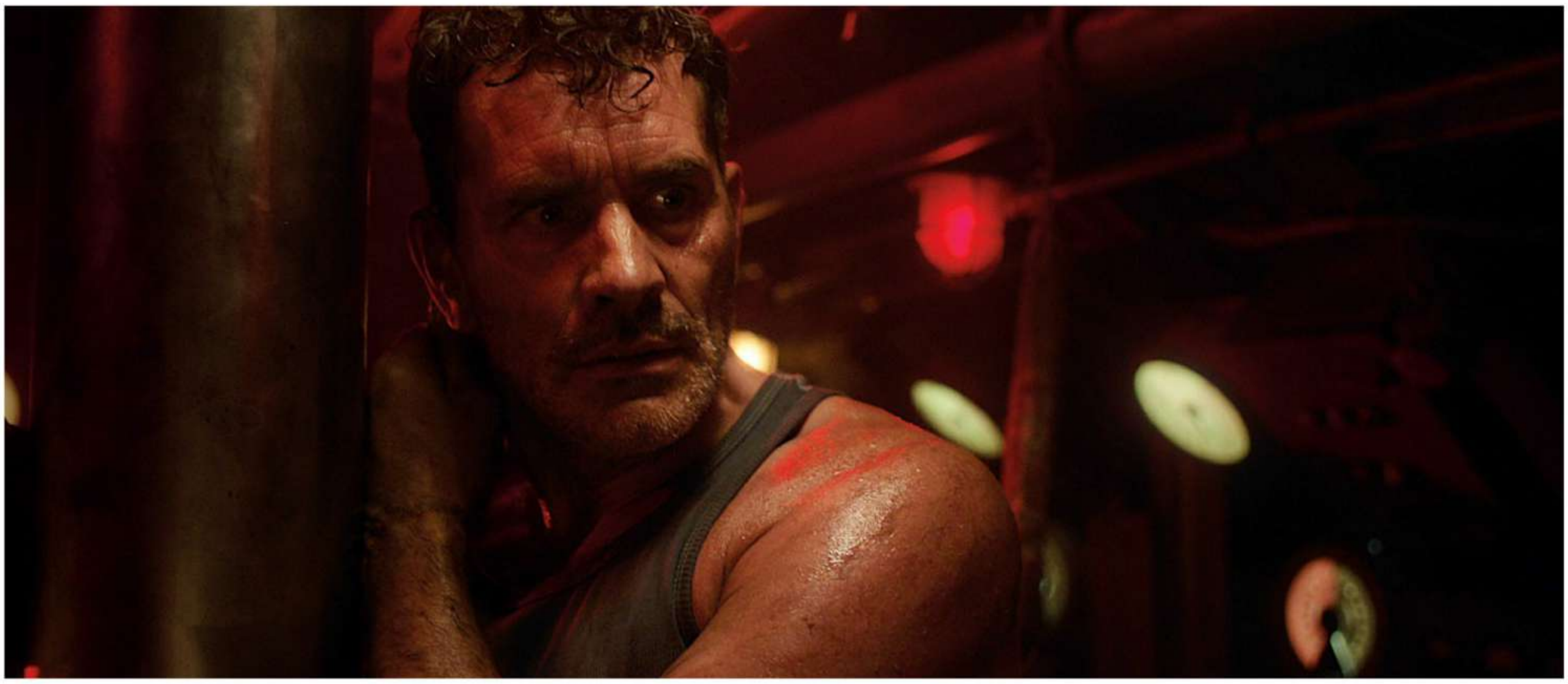


BARBAROSSA & THE BLOODIEST WAR IN HISTORY

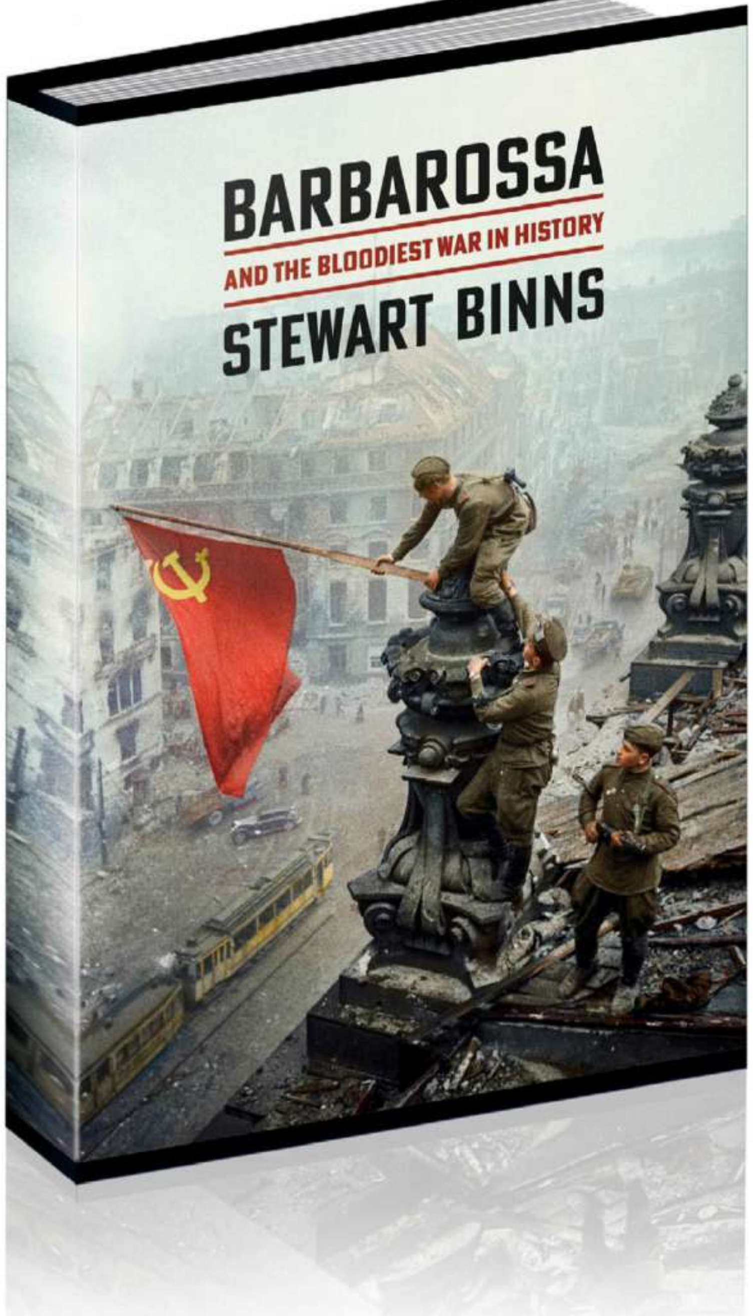
THE STORY OF THE MOST EPIC STRUGGLE IN THE HISTORY OF WARFARE TOLD THROUGH THE EYES OF THE SOVIET MEN AND WOMEN WHO FOUGHT IN IT

Author: Stewart Binns **Publisher:** Headline

Binns brings compassion and intelligence to this account of the Russo-German war that focuses on the conflict as a human tragedy for all those involved. Using mountains of testimony from eyewitnesses on the Soviet side, he takes the reader on a journey that starts with the unlikely alliance between Hitler and Stalin, and ends with the latter's eventual victory in the ruins of Berlin in May 1945.

Trying to cover such a mammoth subject is a huge challenge, but Binns marshals his material well to paint a picture that isn't just pins on maps and the movements of armies of millions. He instead presents events through the eyes and actions of ordinary men and women, young and old, who found themselves caught up in a conflict that is a byword for savagery and suffering. The book has a particular focus on the experiences of female participants, be they snipers, pilots, gunners and so on, and this is fascinating given that their contribution to eventual Soviet success has been much neglected by historians.

Covering the entirety of the war, it is the chapters on invasion day – 22 June 1941 – and the subsequent fighting in the summer and autumn of 1941, that stand out and convey something of the magnitude of the human disaster unfolding in the Soviet empire as the Wehrmacht stormed eastwards. The often-horrendous behaviour of both sides is also laid bare, but at its heart the book offers a compelling view of men and women enduring the horrors of a war without pity. **JT**



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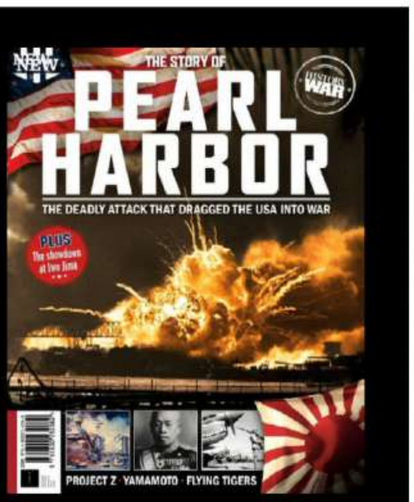
INSIDE THE TITANIC CLASH BETWEEN NAZI GERMANY AND THE SOVIET UNION THAT DECIDED THE FATE OF THE WORLD

WWII claimed over 70 million lives during six years of savage fighting, many of them civilians trapped in the path of invading armies hellbent on victory at all costs. Yet despite events such as Dunkirk, Pearl Harbour and D-Day rightly being commemorated in the West, the bulk of the war was fought in the East, in the snow-blasted tundras and shell-shattered cities of the Soviet Union. From June 1941 to May 1945, Nazi Germany and the USSR were locked in a death struggle upon which the fate of the world, let alone the war, depended. Millions perished in battles such as Stalingrad, Kursk and the fall of Berlin as two ideologies fought a titanic existential war. This is the story of the Eastern Front.

STORY OF PEARL HARBOR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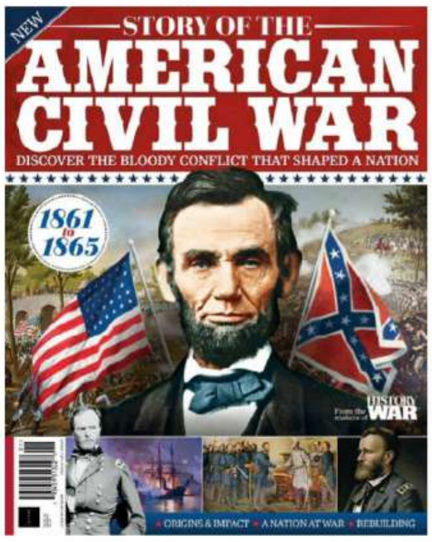
THE STORY OF
PEARL HARBOR
THE DEADLY ATTACK THAT DRAGGED THE USA INTO WAR
PROJECT Z · YAMAMOTO · FLYING TIGERS

As morning broke in Hawaii on 7 December 1941, the water was calm. The US Navy's ships stood proud in the harbour, and their crews were looking forward to a Sunday off. But these would be the last moments of calm before the United States was dragged into a war that was consuming the world. In *The Story Of Pearl Harbor*, discover what really happened that fateful December day and explore the extensive Japanese planning in the months leading up to the attack. Find out how the Americans got a lucky break, and follow the troops from both sides around the Pacific as they fought viciously and tirelessly for glory, their nation and, most of all, survival.

STORY OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR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1861 to 1865
HISTORY OF WAR
ORIGINS & IMPACT · A NATION AT WAR · REBUILDING

On 12 April 1861, the first shots of the American Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter in what would become the bloodiest war in American history. In just four years, more than 600,000 men were killed as a fractured young nation fought to decide its future. In this book, we explore the origins of the conflict, including the divisive issue of slavery, the North's attempts to preserve the Union and South's demands for autonomy. In-depth features on major battles examine the true horrors of the war, while battle maps reveal the tactics that decided the likes of Antietam and Gettysburg. Discover the key leaders and military masterminds whose decisions shaped the conflict, and the sacrifices of the soldiers on both sides. While the war may have ended in 1865, the United States remained bitterly divided for many years. We explore the Reconstruction era, attempts to heal the country's wounds, and the impact the war has had on American history.

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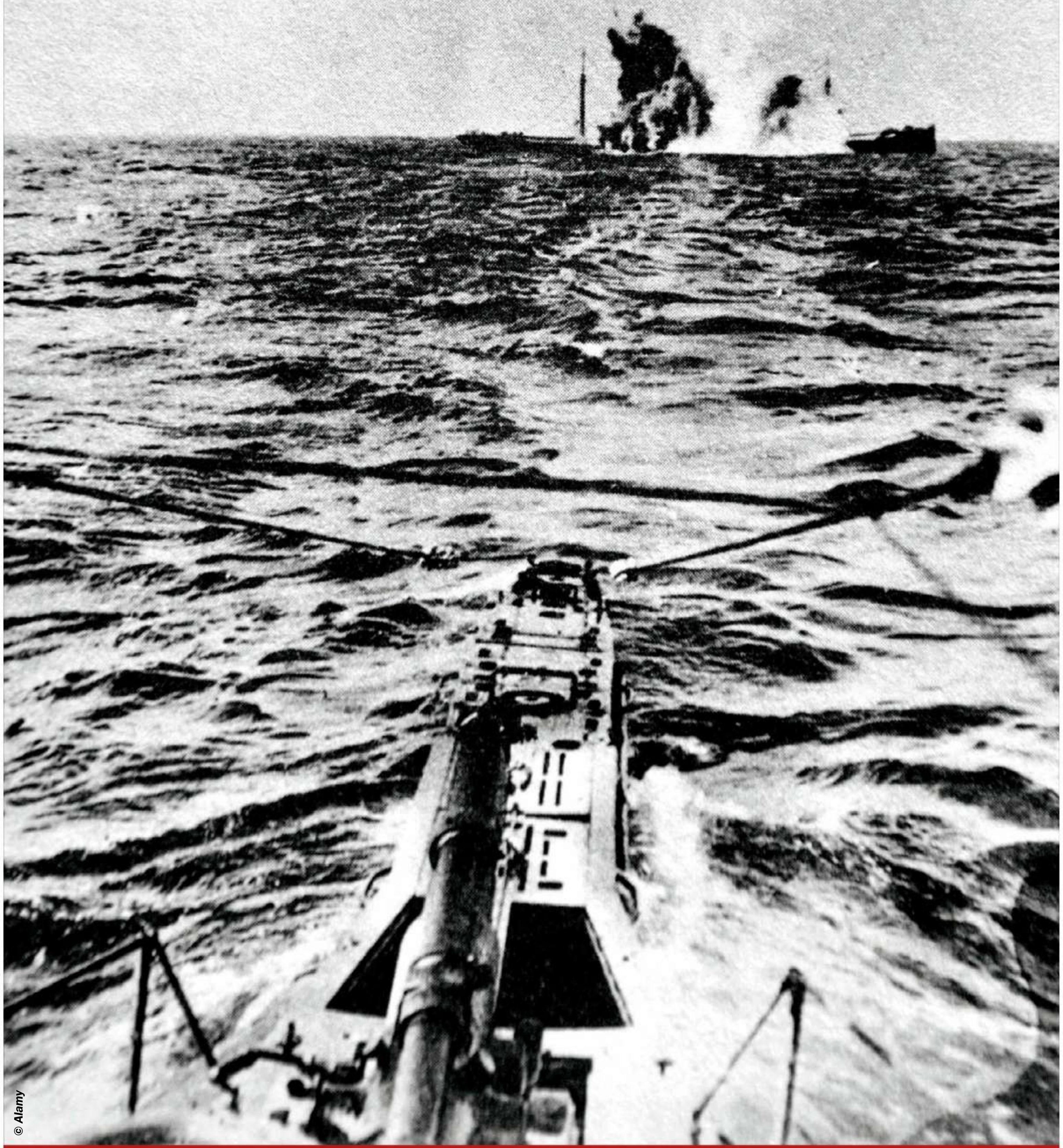

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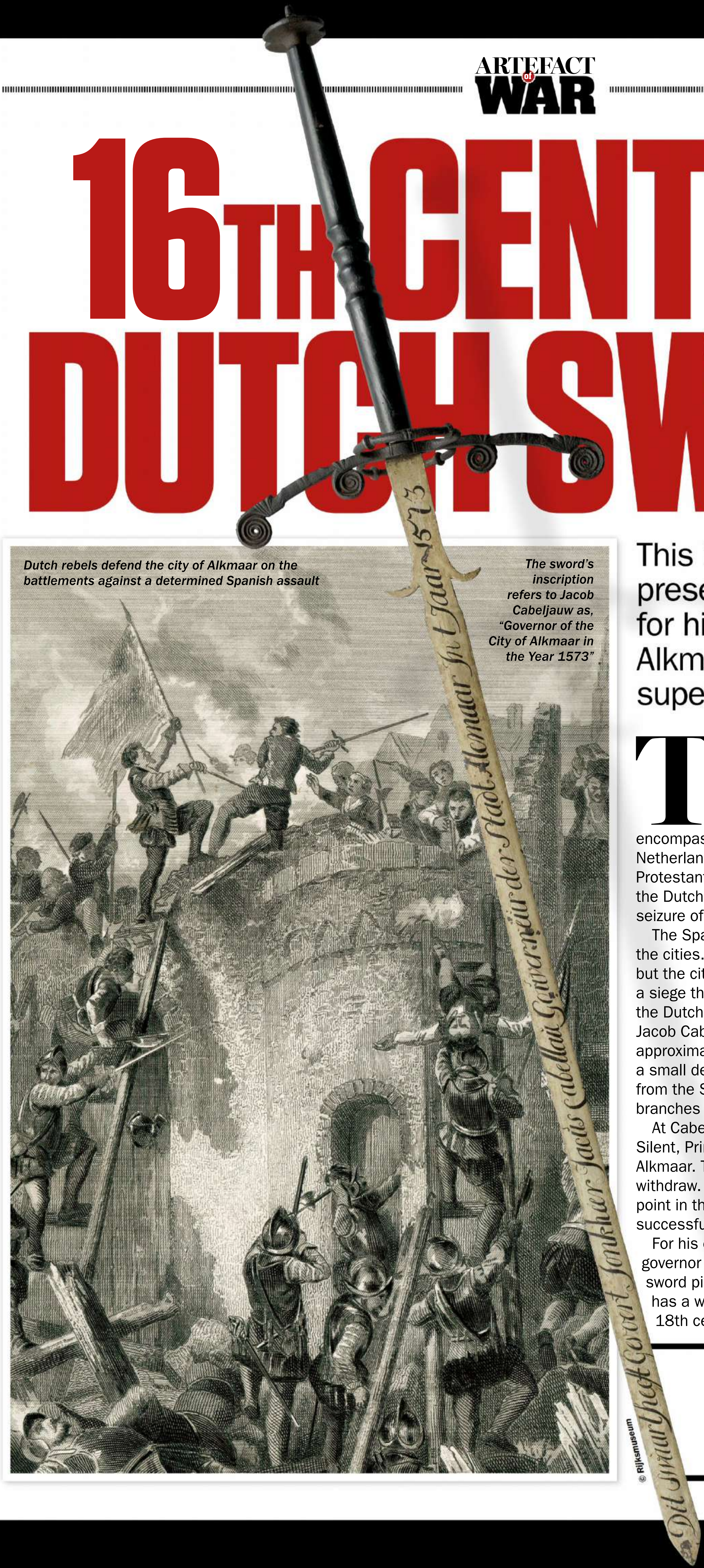
16TH CENTURY DUTCH SWORD


Dit swaard heeft gevoert Jonkher Jacob Cabellau Gouverneur der Stadt Alcmaar In t Jaar 1573

Dutch rebels defend the city of Alkmaar on the battlements against a determined Spanish assault

The sword's inscription refers to Jacob Cabeljauw as, "Governor of the City of Alkmaar in the Year 1573"

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© Rijksmuseum

This impressive weapon was presented to a Dutch rebel for his successful defence of Alkmaar against a numerically superior Spanish army

The 80 Years' War (1568-1648) was the prolonged, bloody attempt by the 'Seventeen Provinces' of the Habsburg Netherlands to gain freedom from Spanish rule. Although the provinces consisted of territory that now encompasses modern Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, the war was critical in the establishment of the Protestant Dutch Republic. The conflict began in 1568 but the Dutch rebellion didn't begin in earnest until 1572 with the seizure of several cities by rebels known as the Geuzen.

The Spanish responded with a brutal campaign to retake the cities. Sackings and massacres became commonplace but the citizens of Alkmaar in north Holland held out. During a siege that lasted between 21 August to 8 October 1573, the Dutch rebel garrison of 800 men was commanded by Jacob Cabeljauw, who employed effective tactics against approximately 16,000 Spanish troops. The garrison and a small detachment of Scottish soldiers threw back assaults from the Spanish besiegers by hurling boiling tar and burning branches from the city walls.

At Cabeljauw's request, the Geuzen leader William the Silent, Prince of Orange, also breached the dykes around Alkmaar. This flooded the Spanish camp and forced them to withdraw. The lifting of the siege is considered to be a turning point in the war because Alkmaar was the first rebel city to successfully resist the Spanish.

For his efforts, Cabeljauw was promoted to military governor of Alkmaar and presented with this two-handed sword pictured here. Made of iron, the sword's blade also has a written inscription that was probably added during the 18th century to record its significance.

RIJKS MUSEUM

Jacob Cabeljauw's sword is part of the collections of the Rijksmuseum, the Netherlands national museum in Amsterdam. For more information visit: www.rijksmuseum.nl

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